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Famous Characters of History

MARIA ANTOINETTE

BY

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT

PORTRAIT, MARIA ANTOINETTE

VOLUME IX

ILLUSTRATED

THE ST. HUBERT GUILD

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Maria Antoinette

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JOHN S. C. ABBOTT

Volume XIX.

ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE

In this history of Maria Antoinette it has been the endeavor to give a faithful narrative of facts, and, so far as possible, to exhibit the soul of history. A more mournful tragedy earth has seldom witnessed. And yet the lesson is full of instruction to all future ages. Intelligence and moral worth combined can be the only basis of national prosperity or domestic happiness. But the simple story itself carries with it its own moral, and *reflections* would encumber rather than enforce its teachings.

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Marie Antoinette

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MARIA ANTOINETTE

CHAPTER I.

Parentage and Childhood.

Maria Theresa.— She succeeds to the throne.— Success of Maria Theresa's enemies.— Her flight to Hungary.— The queen's firmness.— The Hungarian barons.— The queen's appeal.— Enthusiasm of her subjects.— The queen heads her army.— She overthrows her enemies.— Character of Maria Theresa.— Character of her husband.— Crowning of Francis.— Maria Theresa's renown.— Maria Theresa's sternness.— Anecdote.— Fatal result.— Death of Francis.— Plan of the counselors.— Birth of Maria Antoinette.— Maria Antoinette's character.— Affecting scene.—Maria Antoinette's grief.— Maria Theresa as a mother.—Mode of education.— Petty artifices.— Maria's proficiency in French.— She forgets her native tongue.— Maria's taste for music.— Her ignorance of general literature, etc.— The French teachers.— Their characters.— The Abbé de Vermond. — He shamefully abuses his trust.— Etiquette of the French court.— Etiquette of the Austrian court.— Precepts of the teacher.— Character of Maria Antoinette.— Maria a noble girl.— Her virtues and her faults.— Palace of Schoenbrun.— The scenes of Maria's childhood.— Personal appearance of Maria.— Description of Lamartine.- Maria's betrothal.— Its motive.— Maria's feelings on leaving Schoenbrun.— Her love for her home.

In the year 1740, Charles VI., emperor of Austria, died. He left a daughter twenty-three years of age, Maria Theresa, to inherit the crown of that powerful empire. She had been married about four years to Francis, duke of Lorraine. The day after the death of Charles, Maria Theresa ascended the throne.

The treasury of Austria was empty. A general feeling of discontent pervaded the kingdom. Several claimants to the throne rose to dispute the succession with Maria; and France, Spain, Prussia, and Bavaria took advantage of the new reign, and of the embarrassments which surrounded the youthful queen, to enlarge their own borders by wresting territory from Austria.

The young queen, harassed by dissensions at home and by the combined armies of her powerful foes, beheld, with anguish which her proud and imperious spirit could hardly endure, her troops defeated and scattered in every direction, and the victorious armies of her enemies marching almost unimpeded toward her capital. The exulting invaders, intoxicated with unanticipated success, now contemplated the entire division of the spoil. They decided to blot Austria from the map of Europe, and to partition out the conglomerated nations composing the empire among the conquerors.

Maria Theresa retired from her capital as the bayonets of France and Bavaria gleamed from the hillsides which environed the city. Her retreat with a few disheartened followers, in the gloom of night, was illumined by the flames of the bivouacs of hostile armies, with which the horizon seemed to be girdled. The invaders had possession of every strong post in the empire. The beleaguered city was sum-

moned to surrender. Resistance was unavailing. All Europe felt that Austria was hopelessly undone. Maria fled from the dangers of captivity into the wilds of Hungary. But in this dark hour, when the clouds of adversity seemed to be settling in blackest masses over her whole realm, when hope had abandoned every bosom but her own, the spirit of Maria remained as firm and inflexible as if victory were perched upon her standards, and her enemies were flying in dismay before her. She would not listen to one word of compromise. She would not admit the thought of surrendering one acre of the dominions she had inherited from her fathers. Calm, unagitated, and determined, she summoned around her, from their feudal castles, the wild and warlike barons of Hungary. With neighing steeds, and flaunting banners, and steel-clad retainers, and all the paraphernalia of barbaric pomp, these chieftains, delighting in the excitements of war, gathered around the heroic queen. The spirit of ancient chivalry still glowed in these fierce hearts, and they gazed with a species of religious homage upon the young queen, who, in distress, had fled to their wilds to invoke the aid of their strong arms.

Maria met them in council. They assembled around her by thousands in all the imposing splendor of the garniture of war. Maria appeared before these stern chieftains dressed in the garb of the deepest

mourning, with the crown of her ancestors upon her brow, her right hand resting upon the hilt of the sword of the Austrian kings, and leading by her left hand her little daughter Maria Antoinette. The pale and pensive features of the queen attested the resolute soul which no disasters could subdue. Her imperial spirit entranced and overawed the bold knights, who had ever lived in the realms of romance. Maria addressed the Hungarian barons in an impressive speech in Latin, the language then in use in the diets of Hungary, faithfully describing the desperate state of her affairs. She committed herself and her children to their protection, and urged them to drive the invaders from the land or to perish in the attempt. It was just the appeal to rouse such hearts to a phrensy of enthusiasm. The youth, the beauty, the calamities of the queen roused to the utmost intensity the chivalric devotion of these warlike magnates, and grasping their swords and waving them above their heads, they shouted simultaneously, "Moriamur pro rege nostro, Maria Theresa"—*"Let us die for our king, Maria Theresa."*

Until now, the queen had preserved a demeanor perfectly tranquil and majestic. But this affectionate enthusiasm of her subjects entirely overcame her imperious spirit, and she burst into a flood of tears. But, apparently ashamed of this exhibition of womanly feeling, she almost immediately regained her composure,

and resumed the air of the indomitable sovereign. The war cry immediately resounded throughout Hungary. Chieftains and vassals rallied around the banner of Maria. In person she inspected and headed the gathering army, and her spirit inspired them. With the ferocity of despair, these new recruits hurled themselves upon the invaders. A few battles, desperate and sanguinary, were fought, and the army of Maria was victorious. England and Holland, apprehensive that the destruction of the Austrian empire would destroy the balance of power in Europe, and encouraged by the successful resistance which the Austrians were now making, came to the rescue of the heroic queen. The tide of battle was turned. The armies of France, Germany, and Spain were driven from the territory which they had overrun. Maria, with untiring energy, followed up her successes. She pursued her retreating foes into their own country, and finally granted peace to her enemies only by wresting from them large portions of their territory. The renown of these exploits resounded through Europe. The name of Maria Theresa was embalmed throughout the civilized world. Under her vigorous sway, Austria, from the very brink of ruin, was elevated to a degree of splendor and power it had never attained before. These conflicts and victories inspired Maria with a haughty and imperious spirit, and the loveliness of the female character was lost amid the

pomp of martial achievements. The proud sovereign eclipsed the woman.

It is not to be supposed that such a bosom could be the shrine of tenderness and affection. Maria's virtues were all of the masculine gender. She really loved, or, rather, *liked* her husband; but it was with the same kind of emotion with which an energetic and ambitious man loves his wife. She cherished him, protected him, watched over him, and loaded him with honors. He was of a mild, gentle, confiding spirit, and would have made a lovely wife. She was ambitious, fearless, and commanding, and would have made a noble husband. In fact, this was essentially the relation which existed between them. Maria Theresa governed the empire, while Francis loved and caressed the children.

The queen, by her armies and her political influence, had succeeded in having Francis crowned Emperor of Germany. She stood upon the balcony as the imposing ceremony was performed, and was the first to shout "Long live the Emperor Francis I." Like Napoleon, she had become the creator of kings. Austria was now in the greatest prosperity, and Maria Theresa the most illustrious queen in Europe. Her renown filled the civilized world. Through her whole reign, though she became the mother of sixteen children, she devoted herself with untiring energy to the aggrandizement of her empire. She united with Rus-

sia and Prussia in the infamous partition of Poland, and in the banditti division of the spoil she annexed to her own dominions twenty-seven thousand square miles and two million five hundred thousand inhabitants.

From this exhibition of the character of Maria Theresa, the mother of Maria Antoinette, the reader will not be surprised that she should have inspired her children with awe rather than with affection. In truth, their imperial mother was so devoted to the cares of the empire, that she was almost a stranger to her children, and could have known herself but few of the emotions of maternal love. Her children were placed under the care of nurses and governesses from their birth. Once in every eight or ten days the queen appropriated an hour for the inspection of the nursery and the apartments appropriated to the children; and she performed this duty with the same fidelity with which she examined the wards of the state hospitals and the military schools.

The following anecdote strikingly illustrates the austere and inflexible character of the empress. The wife of her son Joseph died of the confluent smallpox, and her body had been consigned to the vaults of the royal tomb. Soon after this event, Josepha, one of the daughters of the empress, was to be married to the King of Naples. The arrangements had all been made for their approaching nuptials, and she

was just on the point of leaving Vienna to ascend to the Neapolitan throne, when she received an order from her mother that she must not depart from the empire until she had, in accordance with the established custom, descended into the tomb of her ancestors and offered her parting prayer. The young princess, in an agony of consternation, received the cruel requisition. Yet she dared not disobey her mother. She took her little sister, Maria Antoinette, whom she loved most tenderly, upon her knee, and, weeping bitterly, bade her farewell, saying that she was sure she should take the dreadful disease and die. Trembling in every fiber, the unhappy princess descended into the gloomy sepulcher, where the bodies of generations of kings were moldering. She hurried through her short prayer, and in the deepest agitation returned to the palace, and threw herself in despair upon her bed.

Her worst apprehensions were realized. The fatal disease had penetrated her veins. Soon it manifested itself in its utmost virulence. After lingering a few days and nights in dreadful suffering, she breathed her last, and her own loathsome remains were consigned to the same silent chambers of the dead. Maria Theresa commanded her child to do no more than she would have insisted upon doing herself under similar circumstances. And when she followed her daughter to the tomb, she probably allowed her-

self to indulge in no regrets in view of the course she had pursued, but consoled herself with the reflection that she had done her duty.

The Emperor Francis died, 1765, leaving Maria Theresa still in the vigor of life, and quite beautiful. Three of her counselors of state, ambitious of sharing the throne with the illustrious queen, entered into a compact, by which they were all to endeavor to obtain her hand in marriage, agreeing that the successful one should devote the power thus obtained to the aggrandizement of the other two. The empress was informed of this arrangement, and, at the close of a cabinet council, took occasion, with great dignity and composure, to inform them that she did not intend ever again to enter into the marriage state, but that, should she hereafter change her mind, it would only be in favor of one who had no ambitious desires, and who would have no inclination to intermeddle with the affairs of state; and that, should she ever marry one of her ministers, she should immediately remove him from all office. Her counselors, loving power more than all things else, immediately abandoned every thought of obtaining the hand of Maria at such a sacrifice.

Maria Antoinette, the subject of this biography, was born on the 2d of November, 1755. Few of the inhabitants of this world have commenced life under circumstances of greater splendor, or with more bril-

liant prospects of a life replete with happiness. She was a child of great vivacity and beauty, full of light-heartedness, and ever prone to look upon the sunny side of every prospect. Her disposition was frank, cordial, and affectionate. Her mental endowments were by nature of a very superior order. Laughing at the restraints of royal etiquette, she, by her generous and confiding spirit, won the love of all hearts. Maria Antoinette was but slightly acquainted with her imperial mother, and could regard her with no other emotions than those of respect and awe; but the mild and gentle spirit of her father took in her heart a mother's place, and she clung to him with the most ardent affection.

When she was but ten years of age, her father was one day going to Inspruck upon some business. The royal cavalcade was drawn up in the court-yard of the palace. The emperor had entered his carriage, surrounded by his retinue, and was just on the point of leaving, when he ordered the postillions to delay, and requested an attendant to bring to him his little daughter Maria Antoinette. The blooming child was brought from the nursery, with her flaxen hair in ringlets clustered around her shoulders, and presented to her father. As she entwined her arms around his neck and clung to his embrace, he pressed her most tenderly to his bosom, saying, "Adieu, my dear little daughter. Father wished once more to press you to

his heart." The emperor and his child never met again. At Inspruck Francis was taken suddenly ill, and, after a few days' sickness, died. The grief of Maria Antoinette knew no bounds. But the tears of childhood soon dried up. The parting scene, however, produced an impression upon Maria which was never effaced, and she ever spoke of her father in terms of the warmest affection.

Maria Theresa, half conscious of the imperfect manner in which she performed her maternal duties, was very solicitous to have it understood that she did not neglect her children; that she was the best *mother* in the world as well as the most illustrious sovereign. When any distinguished stranger from the other courts of Europe visited Vienna, she arranged her sixteen children around the dinner-table, towering above them in queenly majesty, and endeavored to convey the impression that they were the especial objects of her motherly care. It was not, however, the generous warmth of love, but the cold sense of duty, which alone regulated her conduct in reference to them, and she had probably convinced herself that she discharged her maternal obligations with the most exemplary fidelity.

The family physician every morning visited each one of the children, and then briefly reported to the empress the health of the archdukes and the archduchesses. This report fully satisfied all the yearn-

ings of maternal love in the bosom of Maria Theresa; though she still, that she might not fail in the least degree in motherly affection, endeavored to see them with her own eyes, and to speak to them with her own lips, as often as once in a week or ten days. The preceptors and governesses of the royal household, being thus left very much to themselves, were far more anxious to gratify the immediate wishes of the children, and thus to secure their love, than to urge them to efforts for intellectual improvement. Maria Antoinette, in subsequent life, related many amusing anecdotes illustrative of the petty artifices by which the scrutiny of the empress was eluded. The copies which were presented to the queen in evidence of the progress the children were making in handwriting were all traced first in pencil by the governess. The children then followed with the pen over the penciled lines. Drawings were exhibited, beautifully executed, to show the skill Maria Antoinette had attained in that delightful accomplishment, which drawings the pencil of Maria had not even touched. She was also taught to address strangers of distinction in short Latin phrases, when she did not understand the meaning of one single word of the language. Her teacher of Italian, the Abbé Metastasio, was the only one who was faithful in his duties, and Maria made very great proficiency in that language. French being the language of the nursery, Maria necessarily

acquired the power of speaking it with great fluency, though she was quite unable to write it correctly. In the acquisition of French, her own mother tongue, the German, was so totally neglected, that, incredible as it may seem, she actually lost the power either of speaking or of understanding it. In after years, chagrined at such unutterable folly, she sat down with great resolution to the study of her own native tongue, and encountered all the difficulties which would tax the patience of any foreigner in the attempt. She persevered for about six weeks, and then relinquished the enterprise in despair. The young princess was extremely fond of music, and yet she was not taught to play well upon any instrument. This became subsequently a source of great mortification to her, for she was ashamed to confess her ignorance of an accomplishment deemed, in the courts of Europe, so essential to a polished education, and yet she dared not sit down to any instrument in the presence of others. When she first arrived at Versailles as the bride of the heir to the throne of France, she was so deeply mortified at this defect in her education, that she immediately employed a teacher to give her lessons secretly for three months. During this time she applied herself to her task with the utmost assiduity, and at the end of the time gave surprising proof of the skill she had so rapidly attained. Upon all the subjects of history, science, and

general literature, the princess was left entirely uninformed. The activity and energy of her mind only led her the more poignantly to feel the mortification to which this ignorance often exposed her. When surrounded by the splendors of royalty, she frequently retired to weep over deficiencies which it was too late to repair. The wits of Paris seized upon these occasional developments of the want of mental culture as the indication of a weak mind, and the daughter of Maria Theresa, the descendant of the Cæsars, was the butt, in saloon and café, of merriment and song. Maria was beautiful and graceful, and winning in all her ways. But this imperfect education, exposing her to contempt and ridicule in the society of intellectual men and women, was not among the unimportant elements which conducted to her own ruin, to the overthrow of the French throne, and to that deluge of blood which for many years rolled its billows incarnadine over Europe.

Maria Theresa had sent to Paris for two teachers of French to instruct her daughter in the literature of that country over which she was destined to reign. From that pleasure-loving metropolis two play actors were sent to take charge of her education, one of whom was a man of notoriously dissolute character. As the connection between Maria Antoinette and Louis, the heir apparent to the throne of France, was already contemplated, some solicitude was felt by

members of the court of Versailles in reference to the impropriety of this selection, and the French embassador at Vienna was requested to urge the empress to dismiss the obnoxious teachers, and make a different choice. She immediately complied with the request, and sent to the Duke de Choiseul, the minister of state of Louis XV., to send a preceptor such as would be acceptable to the court of Versailles. After no little difficulty in finding one in whom all parties could unite, the Abbé de Vermond was selected, a vain, ambitious, weak-minded man, who, by the most studied artifice, insinuated himself into the good graces of Maria Theresa, and gained a great but pernicious influence over the mind of his youthful pupil. The cabinets of France and Austria having decided the question that Maria Antoinette was to be the bride of Louis, who was soon to ascend the throne of France, the Abbé de Vermond, proud of his position as the intellectual and moral guide of the destined Queen of France, shamefully abused his trust, and sought only to obtain an abiding influence, which he might use for the promotion of his own ambition. He carefully kept her in ignorance, to render himself more necessary to her; and he was never unwilling to involve her in difficulties, that she might be under the necessity of appealing to him for extrication.

Instead of endeavoring to prepare her for the sit-

uation she was destined to fill, it seemed to be his aim to train her to such habits of thought and feeling as would totally incapacitate her to be happy, or to acquire an influence over the gay but ceremony-loving assemblages of the Tuileries, Versailles, and St. Cloud. At this time, the fashion of the French court led to extreme attention to all the punctilios of etiquette. Every word, every gesture, was regulated by inflexible rule. Every garment worn, and every act of life, was regulated by the requisitions of the code ceremonial. Virtue was concealed and vice garnished by the inflexible observance of stately forms. An infringement of the laws of etiquette was deemed a far greater crime than the most serious violation of the laws of morality. In the court of Vienna, on the other hand, fashion ran to just the other extreme. It was fashionable to despise fashion. It was etiquette to pay no regard to etiquette. The haughty Austrian noble prided himself in dressing as he pleased, and looked with contempt upon the studied attitudes and foppish attire of the French. The Parisian courtier, on the other hand, rejoicing in his ruffles, and ribbons, and practiced movements, despised the boorish manners, as he deemed them, of the Austrian.

The Abbé de Vermond, to ingratiate himself with the Austrian court, did all in his power to inspire Maria Antoinette with contempt of Parisian manners. He zealously conformed to the customs prevailing in

Vienna, and, like all new converts, to prove the sincerity of his conversion, went far in advance of his sect in intemperate zeal. Maria Antoinette was but a child, mirthful, beautiful, open hearted, and, like all other children, loving freedom from restraint. Her preceptor ridiculed incessantly, mercilessly, the manners of the French court, where she was soon to reign as queen, and influenced her to despise that salutary regard to appearances so essential in all refined life. Under this tutelage, Maria became as natural, unguarded, and free as a mountain maid. She smiled or wept, as the mood was upon her. She was cordial toward those she loved, and distant and reserved toward those she despised. She cared not to repress her emotions of sadness or mirthfulness as occasions arose to excite them. She was conscientious, and unwilling to do that which she thought to be wrong, and still she was imprudent, and troubled not herself with the interpretation which others might put upon her conduct. She prided herself a little upon her independence and recklessness of the opinions of others, and thus she was ever incurring undeserved censure, and becoming involved in unmerited difficulties. She was, in heart, truly a noble girl. Her faults were the excesses of a generous and magnanimous spirit. Though she inherited much of the imperial energy of her mother, it was tempered and adorned with the mildness and affectionateness of her father.

Her education had necessarily tended to induce her to look down with aristocratic pride upon those beneath her in rank in life, and to dream that the world and all it inherits was intended for the exclusive benefit of kings and queens. Still, the natural goodness of her heart ever led her to acts of kindness and generosity. She thus won the love, almost without seeking it, of all who knew her well. Her faults were the unavoidable effect of her birth, her education, and all those nameless but untoward influences which surrounded her from the cradle to the grave. Her virtues were all her own, the instinctive emotions of a frank, confiding, and magnanimous spirit.

The childhood of Maria Antoinette was probably, on the whole, as happy as often falls to the lot of humanity. As she had never known a mother's love, she never felt its loss. There are few more enchanting abodes upon the surface of the globe than the pleasure palaces of the Austrian kings. Forest and grove, garden and wild, rivulet and lake, combine all their charms to lend fascination to those haunts of regal festivity. In the palace of Schoenbrun, and in the imbowered gardens which surround that world-renowned habitation of princely grandeur, Maria passed many of the years of her childhood. Now she trod the graveled walk, pursuing the butterfly, and gathering the flowers, with brothers and sisters joining in

the recreation. Now the feet of her pony scattered the pebbles of the path, as the little troop of equestrians cantered beneath the shade of majestic elms. Now the prancing steeds draw them in the chariot, through the infinitely diversified drives, and the golden leaves of autumn float gracefully through the still air upon their heads. The boat, with damask cushions and silken awning, invites them upon the lake. The strong arms of the rowers bear them with fairy motion to sandy beach and jutting head-land, to island, and rivulet, and bay, while swans and water-fowl, of every variety of plumage, sport before them and around them. Such were the scenes in which Maria Antoinette passed the first fourteen years of her life. Every want which wealth could supply was gratified. "What a destiny!" exclaimed a Frenchman, as he looked upon one similarly situated, "what a destiny! young, rich, beautiful, and an archduchess! *Ma foi! quel destiné!*"

The personal appearance of Maria Antoinette, as she bloomed into womanhood, is thus described by Lamartine. "Her beauty dazzled the whole kingdom. She was of a tall, graceful figure, a true daughter of the Tyrol. The natural majesty of her carriage destroyed none of the graces of her movements; her neck, rising elegantly and distinctly from her shoulders, gave expression to every attitude. The woman was perceptible beneath the queen, the tenderness of

heart was not lost in the elevation of her destiny. Her light brown hair was long and silky; her forehead, high and rather projecting, was united to her temples by those fine curves which give so much delicacy and expression to that seat of thought, or the soul in woman; her eyes, of that clear blue which recall the skies of the north or the waters of the Danube; an aquiline nose, the nostrils open and slightly projecting, where emotions palpitate and courage is evidenced; a large mouth, Austrian lips, that is, projecting and well defined; an oval countenance, animated, varying, impassioned, and the *ensemble* of these features, replete with that expression, impossible to describe, which emanates from the look, the shades, the reflections of the face, which encompasses it with an iris like that of the warm and tinted vapor, which bathes objects in full sunlight — the extreme loveliness which the ideal conveys, and which, by giving it life, increases its attraction. With all these charms, a soul yearning to attach itself, a heart easily moved, but yet earnest in desire to fix itself; a pensive and intelligent smile, with nothing of vacuity in it, because it felt itself worthy of friendships. Such was Maria Antoinette as a woman."

When but fourteen years of age she was affianced as the bride of young Louis, the grandson of Louis XV., and heir apparent to the throne of France. Neither of the youthful couple had ever seen each

other, and neither of them had any thing to do in forming the connection. It was deemed expedient by the cabinets of Versailles and Vienna that the two should be united, in order to promote friendly alliance between France and Austria. Maria Antoinette had never dreamed even of questioning any of her mother's arrangements, and consequently she had no temptation to consider whether she liked or disliked the plan. She had been trained to the most unhesitating submission to maternal authority. The childish heart of the mirth-loving princess was doubtless dazzled with the anticipations of the splendors which awaited her at Versailles and St. Cloud. But when she bade adieu to the gardens of Schoenbrun, and left the scenes of her childhood, she entered upon one of the wildest careers of terror and of suffering which mortal footsteps have ever trod. The parting from her mother gave her no especial pain, for she had ever looked up to her as to a superior being, to whom she was bound to render homage and obedience, rather than as to a mother around whom the affections of her heart were entwined. But she loved her brothers and sisters most tenderly. She was extremely attached to the happy home where her childish heart had basked in all childish pleasures, and many were the tears she shed when she looked back from the eminences which surround Vienna upon those haunts to which she was destined never again to return.

CHAPTER II.

Bridal Days.

Louis XV.— Prince Louis.— Madame du Barri.— Her dissolute character.— Children of Louis XV.— Anecdote of Madame du Barri.— Madame du Barri's beauty.— Her political influence.— Madame du Barri's pavilion. — The Duke de Brissac.— Madame du Barri's flight.— She is betrayed.— Condemnation of Madame du Barri.— Her anguish and despair.— Execution of Madame du Barri.— Letter from Maria Theresa.— Departure of Maria for Paris.— Emotions of the populace.— Magnificent pavilion.— Singular custom.— Grand procession.— The reception.— Young Louis's indifference.— The marriage.— Insensibility of young Louis.— Acclamations of the Parisians.— Maria shows herself to the populace.— She receives their homage.— The fire-works.— Awful conflagration.— Scene of horror.— Consternation of Maria.— Presents from Louis XV.— Malice of Madame du Barri.— Maria's difficulties.— The Countess de Noailles.— Laws of etiquette.— An illustration.— Countess de Noailles's ideas of etiquette.— An anecdote.— Maria's contempt of etiquette.— The Countess de Noailles nicknamed.— Ludicrous scene.— Rage of the old ladies.— Habits of Maria Theresa.— The dauphiness becomes unpopular.— Dining in public.— How it was done.— Versailles.— Magnificence of the palace.— Gallery of paintings, statuary, etc.— Gorgeous saloons.— Splendid gardens.— Other palaces.— The Great and the Little Trianon.— Gardens, cascades, etc.— Nature of Maria's mind.— Walks in the gardens.— Maria's want of education.— She attempts to supply it.— Maria's enemies.— Their malignant slanders.— Visit of Maximilian. —The quarrel about forms.— Unexpected tenderness of Louis.

WHEN Maria Antoinette was fifteen years of age, a light-hearted, blooming, beautiful girl, hardly yet emerging from the period of childhood, all Austria, indeed all Europe, was interested in the preparations for her nuptials with the destined King of France. Louis XV. still sat

upon the throne of Charlemagne. His eldest son had died about ten years before, leaving a little boy, some twelve years of age, to inherit the crown his father had lost by death. The young Louis, grandchild of the reigning king, was mild, inoffensive, and bashful, with but little energy of mind, with no ardor of feeling, and singularly destitute of all passions. He was perfectly exemplary in his conduct, perhaps not so much from inherent strength of principle as from possessing that peculiarity of temperament, cold and phlegmatic, which feels not the power of temptation. He submitted passively to the arrangements for his marriage, never manifesting the slightest emotion of pleasure or repugnance in view of his approaching alliance with one of the most beautiful and fascinating princesses of Europe. Louis was entirely insensible to all the charms of female beauty, and seemed incapable of feeling the emotion of love.

Louis XV., a pleasure-loving, dissolute man, had surrounded his throne with all the attractions of fashionable indulgence and dissipation. There was one woman in his court, Madame du Barri, celebrated in the annals of profligacy, who had acquired an entire ascendency over the mind of the king. The disreputable connection existing between her and the monarch excluded her from respect, and yet the king loaded her with honors, received her at his table, and

forced her society upon all the inmates of the palace. The court was full of jealousies and bickerings; and while one party were disposed to welcome Maria Antoinette, hoping that she would espouse and strengthen their cause, the other party looked upon her with suspicion and hostility, and prepared to meet her with all the weapons of annoyance.

Neither morals nor religion were then of any repute in the court of France. Vice did not even affect concealment. The children of Louis XV. were educated, or rather not educated in a nunnery. The Princess Louisa, when twelve years of age, knew not the letters of her alphabet. When the children did wrong, the sacred sisters sent them, for penance, into the dark, damp, and gloomy sepulcher of the convent, where the remains of the departed nuns were moldering to decay. Here the timid and superstitious girls, in an agony of terror, were sent alone, to make expiation for some childish offense. The little Princess Victoire, who was of a very nervous temperament, was thrown into convulsions by this harsh treatment, and the injury to her nervous system was so irreparable, that during her whole life she was exposed to periodical paroxysms of panic terror.

One day the king, when sitting with Madame du Barri, received a package of letters. The petted favorite, suspecting that one of them was from an enemy of hers, snatched the packet from the king's

hand. As he endeavored to regain it, she resisted, and ran two or three times around the table, which was in the center of the room, eagerly pursued by the irritated monarch. At length, in the excitement of this most strange conflict, she threw the letters into the glowing fire of the grate, where they were all consumed. The king, enraged beyond endurance, seized her by the shoulders, and thrust her violently out of the room. After a few hours, however, the weak-minded monarch called upon her. The countess, trembling in view of her dismissal, with its dreadful consequences of disgrace and beggary, threw herself at his feet, bathed in tears, and they were reconciled.

The remaining history of this celebrated woman is so remarkable that we can not refrain from briefly recording it. Her marvelous beauty had inflamed the passions of the king, and she had obtained so entire an ascendency over his mind that she was literally the monarch of France. The treasures of the empire were emptied into her lap. Notwithstanding the stigma attached to her position, the nation, accustomed to this laxity of morals, submitted to the yoke. As the idol of the king, and the dispenser of honors and powers, the clergy, the nobility, the philosophers, all did her homage. She was still young, and in all the splendor of her ravishing beauty, when the king died. For the sake of appearances, she retired for a few

months into a nunnery. Soon, however, she emerged again into the gay world. Her limitless power over the voluptuous old monarch had enabled her to amass an enormous fortune. With this she reared and embellished for herself a magnificent retreat, adorned with more than regal splendor, in the vicinity of Paris — the Pavillon de Luciennes, on the borders of the forest of St. Germain. The old Duke de Brissac, who had long been an admirer of her charms, here lived with her in unsanctified union. Almost universal corruption at that time pervaded the nobility of France — one of the exciting causes of the Revolution. Though excluded from appearing at the court of Louis XVI. and Maria Antoinette, her magnificent saloons were crowded by those ever ready to worship at the shrine of wealth, and rank, and power. But, as the stormy days of the Revolution shed their gloom over France, and an infuriated populace were wreaking their vengeance upon the throne and the nobles, Madame du Barri, terrified by the scenes of violence daily occurring, prepared to fly from France. She invested enormous funds in England, and one dark night went out with the Duke de Brissac alone, and, by the dim light of a lantern, they dug a hole under the foot of a tree in the park, and buried much of the treasure which she was unable to take away with her. In disguise, she reached the coast of France, and escaped across the Channel to England. Here she devoted her

immense revenue to the relief of the emigrants who were every day flying in dismay from the horrors with which they were surrounded. The Duke de Brissac, who was commander of the constitutional guard of the king, appeared at Versailles in an hour of great excitement. The mob attacked him. He was instantly assassinated. His head, covered with the white locks of age was cut off, and planted upon one of the palisades of the palace gates, a fearful warning to all who were suspected of advocating the cause of the king.

And now no one knew of the buried treasure but Madame du Barri herself. She, anxious to regain them, ventured, in disguise, to return to France to disinter her diamonds, and take them with her to England. A young negro servant, whom she had pampered with every indulgence, and had caressed with the fondness with which a mother fondles her child, whom she had caused to be painted by her side in her portraits, saw his mistress and betrayed her. She was immediately seized by the mob, and dragged before the revolutionary tribunal of Luciennes. She was condemned as a Royalist, and was hurried along in the cart of the condemned, amid the execrations and jeers of the delirious mob, to the guillotine. Her long hair was shorn, that the action of the knife might be unimpeded; but the clustering ringlets, in beautiful profusion, fell over her brow and temples,

and veiled her voluptuous features and bare bosom, from which the executioner had torn the veil. The yells of the infuriated and deriding populace filled the air, as they danced exultingly around the aristocratic courtesan. But the shrieks of the unhappy victim pierced shrilly through them all. She was frantic with terror. Her whole soul was unnerved, and not one emotion of fortitude remained to sustain the woman of pleasure through her dreadful doom. With floods of tears, and gestures of despair, and beseeching, heart-rending cries, she incessantly exclaimed, "Life —life—life! O save me! save me!" The mob jeered, and derided, and insulted her in every conceivable way. They made themselves merry with her anguish and terror. They shouted witticisms in her ear respecting the pillow of the guillotine upon which she was to repose her head. Struggling and shrieking, she was bound to the plank. Suddenly her voice was hushed. The dissevered head, dripping with blood, fell into the basket, and her soul was in eternity. Poor woman! It is easy to condemn. It is better for the heart to pity. Endowed with almost celestial beauty, living in a corrupt age, and lured, when a child, by a monarch's love, she fell. It is well to weep over her sad fate, and to remember the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation."

Such were the characters and such the state of morals of the court into which this beautiful and art-

less princess, Maria Antoinette, but fifteen years of age, was to be introduced. As she left the palaces of Vienna to encounter the temptations of the Tuileries and Versailles, Maria Theresa wrote the following characteristic letter to the future husband of her daughter:

"Your bride, dear dauphin, is separated from me. As she has ever been my delight, so will she be your happiness. For this purpose have I educated her; for I have long been aware that she was to be the companion of your life. I have enjoined upon her, as among her highest duties, the most tender attachment to your person, the greatest attention to every thing that can please or make you happy. Above all, I have recommended to her humility toward God, because I am convinced that it is impossible for us to contribute to the happiness of the subjects confided to us without love to Him who breaks the scepters and crushes the thrones of kings according to His will."

The great mass of the Austrian population, hating the French, with whom they had long been at war, were exceedingly averse to this marriage. As the train of royal carriages was drawn up, on the morning of her departure, to convey the bride to Paris, an immense assemblage of the populace of Vienna, men, women, and children, surrounded the cortège with weeping

and lamentation. Loyalty was then an emotion existing in the popular mind with an intensity which now can hardly be conceived. At length, in the excitement of their feelings, to save the beloved princess from a doom which they deemed dreadful, they made a rush toward the carriages to cut the traces and thus to prevent the departure. The guard was compelled to interfere, and repel, with violence, the affectionate mob. As the long and splendid train, preceded and followed by squadrons of horse, disappeared through the gate of the city, a universal feeling of sadness oppressed the capital. The people returned to their homes silent and dejected, as if they had been witnessing the obsequies rather than the nuptials of the beloved princess.

The gorgeous cavalcade proceeded to Kell, on the frontiers of Austria and France. There a magnificent pavilion had been erected, consisting of a vast saloon, with an apartment at either end. One of these apartments was assigned to the lords and ladies of the court of Vienna; the other was appropriated to the brilliant train which had come from Paris to receive the bride. The two courts vied with each other in the exhibition of wealth and magnificence. It was an established law of French etiquette, always observed on such occasions, that the royal bride should receive her wedding dress from France, and should retain absolutely nothing belonging to a foreign court. The

MARIA ANTOINETTE. CEREMONY OF CHANGING HER DRESS AT KELL BEFORE ARRIVING AT PARIS

princess was, consequently, in the pavilion appropriated to the Austrian suite, unrobed of all her garments, excepting her body linen and stockings. The door was then thrown open, and in this plight the beautiful and blushing child advanced into the saloon. The French ladies rushed to meet her. Maria threw herself into the arms of the Countess de Noailles, and wept convulsively. The French were perfectly enchanted with her beauty; and the proud position of her head and shoulders betrayed to their eyes the daughter of the Cæsars. She was immediately conducted to the apartment appropriated to the French court. Here the few remaining articles of clothing were removed from her person, and she was redressed in the most brilliant attire which the wealth of the French monarchy could furnish.

And now, charioted in splendor, surrounded by the homage of lords and ladies, accompanied by all the pomp of civic and military parade, and enlivened by the most exultant strains of martial bands, Maria was conducted toward Paris, while her Austrian friends bade her adieu and returned to Vienna. The horizon, by night, was illumined by bonfires, flaming upon every hill; the church bells rang their merriest peals; cities blazed with illuminations and fire-works; and files of maidens lined her way, singing their songs of welcome, and carpeting her path with roses. It was a scene to dazzle the most firm and contem-

plative. No dream of romance could have been more bewildering to the ardent and romantic princess, just emerging from the cloistered seclusion of the palace nursery.

Louis, then a young man about twenty years of age, came from Paris with his grandfather, King Louis XV., and a splendid retinue of courtiers, as far as Compiègne, to meet his bride. Uninfluenced by any emotions of tenderness, apparently entirely unconscious of all those mysterious emotions which bind loving hearts, he saluted the stranger with cold and distant respect. He thought not of wounding her feelings; he had no aversion to the connection, but he seemed not even to think of any more intimacy with Maria than with any other lady who adorned the court. The ardent and warm-hearted princess was deeply hurt at this indifference; but instinctive pride forbade its manifestation, except in bosom converse to a few confiding friends.

The bride and her passive and unimpassioned bridegroom were conducted to Versailles. It was the 16th of May, 1770, when the marriage ceremony was performed, with all the splendor with which it could be invested. The gorgeous palaces of Versailles were thronged with the nobility of Europe, and filled with rejoicing. The old king was charmed with the beauty and affability of the young bride. All hearts were filled with happiness, except those of the newly-mar-

ried couple. Louis was tranquil and contented. He was neither allured nor repelled by his bride. He never sought her society alone, and ever approached her with the same distance and reserve with which he would approach any other young lady who was a visitor at the palace. He never intruded upon the privacy of her apartments, and she was his wife but in name. While all France was filled with the praises of her beauty, and all eyes were enchanted by her graceful demeanor, her husband alone was insensible to her charms. After a few days spent with the rejoicing court, amid the bowers and fountains of Versailles, the nuptial party departed for Paris, and entered the palace of the Tuileries, the scene of future sorrows such as few on earth have ever experienced.

As Maria, in dazzling beauty, entered Paris, the whole city was in a delirium of pleasure. Triumphal arches greeted her progress. The acclamations of hundreds of thousands filled the air. The journals exhausted the French language in extolling her loveliness. Poets sang her charms, and painters vied with each other in transferring her features to canvas. As Maria sat in the dining saloon of the Tuileries at the marriage entertainment, the shouts of the immense assemblage thronging the gardens rendered it necessary for her to present herself to them upon the balcony. She stepped from the window, and looked

out upon the vast sea of heads which filled the garden and the Place Louis XV. All eyes were riveted upon her as she stood before the throng upon the balcony in dazzling beauty, and the air resounded with applauses. She exclaimed, with astonishment, "What a concourse!" "Madame," said the governor of Paris, "I may tell you, without fear of offending the dauphin, that they are so many lovers." The heir apparent to the throne of France is called the dauphin; and, until the death of Louis XV., Louis and Maria Antoinette were called the dauphin and dauphiness. Louis seemed neither pleased nor displeased with the acclamations and homage which his bride received. His singularly passionless nature led him to retirement and his books, and he hardly heard even the acclamations with which Paris was filled.

Arrangements had been made for a very brilliant display of fire-works, in celebration of the marriage, at the Place Louis XV. The hundreds of thousands of that pleasure-loving metropolis thronged the Place and all its avenues. The dense mass was wedged as compactly as it was possible to crowd human beings together. Not a spot of ground was left vacant upon which a human foot could be planted. Every house top, every balcony, every embrasure of a window swarmed with the multitude. Long lines of omnibuses, coaches, and carriages of every description, filled with groups of young and

old, were intermingled with the countless multitude —men and horses so crowded into contact that neither could move. It was an impervious ocean of throbbing life. In the center of this Place, the pride of Paris, the scene of its most triumphant festivities and its most unutterable woes, vast scaffolds had been reared, and they were burdened with fire-works, intended to surpass in brilliancy and sublimity any spectacle of the kind earth had ever before witnessed. Suddenly a bright flame was seen, a shriek was heard, and the whole scaffolding, by some accidental spark, was enveloped in a sheet of fire. Then ensued such a scene as no pen can describe and no imagination paint. The awful conflagration converted all the ministers of pleasure into messengers of death. Thousands of rockets filled the air, and, with almost the velocity of lightning, pierced their way through the shrieking, struggling, terror-stricken crowd. Fiery serpents, more terrible, more deadly than the fabled dragons of old, hissed through the air, clung to the dresses of the ladies, enveloping them in flames, and mercilessly burning the flesh to the bone. Mines exploded under the hoofs of the horses, scattering destruction and death on every side. Every species of fire was rained down, a horrible tempest, upon the immovable mass. Shrieks from the wounded and the dying filled the air; and the mighty multitude swayed to and fro, in Herculean, yet unavailing efforts to es-

cape. The horses, maddened with terror, reared and plunged, crushing indiscriminately beneath their tread the limbs of the fallen. The young bride, in her carriage, with a brilliant retinue, and eager to witness the splendor of the anticipated fête, had just approached the Place, when she was struck with consternation at the shrieks of death which filled the air, and at the scene of tumult and terror which surrounded her. The horses were immediately turned, and driven back again with the utmost speed to the palace. But the awful cries of the dying followed her; and it was long ere she could efface from her distracted imagination the impression of that hour of horror. Fifty-three persons were killed outright by this sad casualty, and more than three hundred were dangerously wounded. The dauphin and dauphiness immediately sent their whole income for the year to the unfortunate relatives of those who had perished on that disastrous day.

The old king was exceedingly pleased with the beauty and fascinating frankness and cordiality of Maria. He made her many magnificent presents, and, among others, was a magnificent collar of pearls, the smallest of which was nearly as large as a walnut, which had been brought into France by Anne of Austria. These praises and attentions on the part of the king excited the jealousy of the petted favorite, Madame du Barri. She consequently became, with

the party under her influence, the relentless and unprincipled enemy of Maria. She lost no opportunity to traduce her character. She spread reports every where that Maria hated the French; that she was an Austrian in heart; that her frankness and freedom from the restraints of etiquette were the result of an immoral and depraved mind. She exaggerated her extravagance, and accused her, by whispers and insinuations spread far and near, of the most ignoble crimes of which woman can be guilty. The young and inexperienced dauphiness soon found herself involved in most embarrassing difficulties. She had no kind friend to council her. Louis still remained cold, distant, and reserved. Thus, week after week, month after month, year after year passed on, and for eight years Louis never approached his youthful spouse with any manifestation of confidence and affection but those with which he would regard a mother or a sister. Maria was a wife but in name. She did not share his apartment or his couch. Though deeply wounded by this inexplicable neglect, she seldom spoke of it even to her most intimate friends. The involuntary sigh, and the tear which often moistened her cheek, proclaimed her inward sufferings.

When Maria first arrived in France, the Countess de Noailles was assigned to her as her lady of honor. She was somewhat advanced in life, haughty and ceremonious, a perfect mistress of that art of etiquette

so rigidly observed in the French court. Upon her devolved the duty of instructing the dauphiness in all the punctilios of form, then deemed far more important than the requisitions of morality. The following anecdote, related by Madame Campan, illustrates the ridiculous excess to which these points of etiquette were carried. One winter's day, it happened that Maria Antoinette, who was entirely disrobed in her dressing-room, was just going to put on her body linen. Madame, the lady in attendance, held it ready unfolded for her. The dame d'honneur came in. As she was of superior rank, etiquette required that she should enjoy the privilege of presenting the robe. She hastily slipped off her gloves, took the garment, and at that moment a rustling was heard at the door. It was opened, and in came the Duchess d'Orleans. She now must be the bearer of the garment. But the laws of etiquette would not allow the dame d'honneur to hand the linen directly to the Duchess d'Orleans. It must pass down the various grades of rank to the lowest, and be presented by her to the highest. The linen was consequently passed back again from one to another, till it was placed in the hands of the duchess. She was just on the point of conveying it to its proper destination, when suddenly the door opened, and the Countess of Provence entered. Again the linen passed from hand to hand, till it reached the hands of the

countess. She, perceiving the uncomfortable position of Maria, who sat shivering with cold, with her hands crossed upon her bosom, without stopping to remove her gloves, placed the linen upon the shoulders of the dauphiness. She, however, was quite unable to restrain her impatience, and exclaimed, "How disagreeable, how tiresome!"

Another anecdote illustrates the character of Madame de Noailles, who exerted so powerful an influence upon the destiny of Maria Antoinette. She was a woman of severe manners, but etiquette was the very atmosphere she breathed; it was the soul of her existence. The slightest infringement of the rules of etiquette annoyed her almost beyond endurance. "One day," says Madame Campan, "I unintentionally threw the poor lady into a terrible agony. The queen was receiving, I know not whom — some persons just presented, I believe. The ladies of the bedchamber were behind the queen. I was near the throne, with the two ladies on duty. All was right; at least I thought so. Suddenly I perceived the eyes of Madame de Noailles fixed on mine. She made a sign with her head, and then raised her eyebrows to the top of her forehead, lowered them, raised them again, and then began to make little signs with her hand. From all this pantomime, I could easily perceive that something was not as it should be; and as I looked about on all sides to find out what it was,

the agitation of the countess kept increasing. Maria Antoinette, who perceived all this, looked at me with a smile. I found means to approach her, and she said to me, in a whisper, 'Let down your lappets, or the countess will expire.' All this bustle rose from two unlucky pins, which fastened up my lappets, while the etiquette of costume said *lappets hanging down.*''

One can easily imagine the contempt with which Maria, reared in the freedom of the Austrian court, would regard these punctilios. She did not refrain from treating them with good-natured but unsparing ridicule, and thus she often deeply offended those stiff elderly ladies, who regarded these trifles, which they had been studying all their lives, with almost religious awe. She gave Madame de Noailles the nickname of Madame Etiquette, to the great merriment of some of the courtiers and the great indignation of others. The more grave and stately matrons were greatly shocked by these indiscretions on the part of the mirth-loving queen.

On one occasion, when a number of noble ladies were presented to Maria, the ludicrous appearance of the venerable dowagers, with their little black bonnets with great wings, and the entire of their grotesque dress and evolutions, appealed so impressively to Maria's sense of the ridiculous, that she, with the utmost difficulty, refrained from open laughter. But

when a young marchioness, full of fun and frolic, whose office required that she should continue standing behind the queen, being tired of the ceremony, seated herself upon the floor, and, concealed behind the fence of the enormous hoops of the attendant ladies, began to play off all imaginable pranks with the ladies' hoops, and with the muscles of her own face, the contrast between these childish frolics and the stately dignity of the old dowagers so disconcerted the fun-loving Maria, that, notwithstanding all her efforts at self-control, she could not conceal an occasional smile. The old ladies were shocked and enraged. They declared that she had treated them with derision, that she had no sense of decorum, and that not one of them would ever attend her court again. The next morning a song appeared, full of bitterness, which was spread through Paris. The following was the chorus:

"Little queen! you must not be
So saucy with your twenty years
Your ill-used courtiers soon will see
You pass once more the barriers."

While Madame de Noailles was thus torturing Maria Antoinette, with her exactions, the Abbé de Vermond, on the contrary, was exerting all the strong influence he had acquired over her mind to induce her to despise these requirements of etiquette, and to

treat them with open contempt. Maria Theresa, in the spirit of independence which ever characterizes a strong mind, ordinarily lived like any other lady attending energetically to her duties without any ostentation. She would ride through the streets of Vienna unaccompanied by any retinue; and the other members of the royal family, on all ordinary occasions, dispensed with the pomp and splendors of royalty. Maria Antoinette's education and natural disposition led her to adhere to the customs of the court of her ancestors. Thus was she incessantly annoyed by the diverse influences crowding upon her. Following, however, the bent of her own inclinations, she daily made herself more and more unpopular with the haughty dames who surrounded her.

It was a very great annoyance to Maria that she was compelled to dine every day as a public spectacle. It must seem almost incredible to an American reader that such a custom could ever have existed in France. The arrangement was this. The different members of the royal family dined in different apartments: the king and queen, with such as were admitted to their table, in one room, the dauphin and dauphiness in another, and other members of the royal family in another. Portions of these rooms were railed off, as in court-houses, police rooms, and menageries, for spectators. The good, honest people from the country, after visiting the menageries to see

the lions, tigers, and monkeys fed, hastened to the palace to see the king and queen take their soup. They were always especially delighted with the skill with which Louis XV. would strike off the top of his egg with one blow of his fork. This was the most valuable accomplishment the monarch over thirty millions of people possessed, and the one in which he chiefly gloried. The spectators entered at one door and passed out at another. No respectably dressed person was refused admission. The consequence was, that during the dining hour an interminable throng was pouring through the apartment; those in the advance crowded slowly along by those in the rear, and all eyes riveted upon the royal feeders. The members of the royal family of France, accustomed to this practice from infancy, did not regard it at all. To Maria Antoinette it was, however, excessively annoying, and though she submitted to it while she was dauphiness, as soon as she ascended the throne she discontinued the practice. The people felt that they were thus deprived of one of their inalienable privileges, and murmurs loud and angry rose against the innovating Austrian.

Much of the time of Louis and his bride was passed at the palaces of Versailles. This renowned residence of the royal family of France is situated about ten miles from Paris, in the midst of an extensive plain. Until the middle of the seventeenth cen-

tury it was only a small village. At this time Louis XIV. determined to erect upon this solitary spot a residence worthy of the grandeur of his throne. Seven years were employed in completing the palace, garden, and park. No expense was spared by him or his successors to render it the most magnificent residence in Europe. No regal mansion or city can boast a greater display of reservoirs, fountains, gardens, groves, cascades, and the various other embellishments and appliances of pleasure. The situation of the principal palace is on a gentle elevation. Its front and wings are of polished stone, ornamented with statues, and a colonnade of the Doric order is in the center. The grand hall is about two hundred and twenty feet in length, with costly decorations in marble, paintings, and gilding. The other apartments are of corresponding size and elegance. This beautiful structure is approached by three magnificent avenues, shaded by stately trees, leading respectively from Paris, St. Cloud, and Versailles.

This gorgeous mansion of the monarchs of France presents a front eight hundred feet in length, and has connected with it fifteen projecting buildings of spacious dimensions, decorated with Ionic columns and pilasters, constituting almost a city in itself. One great gallery, adorned with statuary, paintings, and architectural embellishments, is two hundred and thirty-two feet long, thirty broad, and thirty-seven

high, and lighted by seventeen large windows. Many gorgeous saloons, furnished with the most costly splendor, a banqueting-room of the most spacious dimensions, where luxurious kings have long rioted in midnight revels, an opera house and a chapel, whose beautifully fluted pillars support a dome which is the admiration of all who look up upon its graceful beauty, combine to lend attractions to these royal abodes such as few other earthly mansions can rival, and none, perhaps, eclipse. The gardens, in the midst of which this voluptuous residence reposes, are equal in splendor to the palace they are intended to adorn. Here the kings of France had rioted in boundless profusion, and every conceivable appliance of pleasure was collected in these abodes, from which all thoughts of retribution were studiously excluded. The expense incurred in rearing and embellishing this princely structure has amounted to uncounted millions. But we must not forget that these millions were wrested from the toiling multitude, who dwelt in mud hovels, and ate the coarsest food, that their proud and licentious rulers might be "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day." Such was the home to which the beautiful Maria Antoinette, the bride of fifteen, was introduced; and in the midst of temptations to which such voluptuousness exposed her, she entered upon her dark and gloomy career. This, however, was but one of her abodes. It was

but one even of her country seats. At Versailles there were other palaces, in the construction and the embellishment of which the revenues of the kingdom had been lavished and in whose luxurious chambers all the laws of God had been openly set at defiance by those earthly kings who ever forgot that there was one enthroned above them as the King of kings.

Within the circuit of the park are two smaller palaces, called the Great and the Little Trianon. These may be called royal residences in miniature; seats to which the king and queen retired when desirous of laying aside their rank and state. The Little Trianon was a beautiful palace, about eighty feet square. It was built by Louis XV. for Madame du Barri. Its architectural style was that of a Roman pavilion, and it was surrounded with gardens ornamented in the highest attainments of French and English art, diversified with temples, cottages, and cascades. This was the favorite retreat of Maria Antoinette. This she regarded as peculiarly her home. Here she was for a time comparatively happy. Though living in the midst of all the jealousies, and intrigues, and bickerings of a court, and though in heart deeply pained by the strange indifference and neglect which her husband manifested toward her person, the buoyancy of her youthful spirit enabled her to triumph, in a manner, over those influences of depression, and she was the life and the ornament of every gay scene. As her

mind had been but little cultivated, she had but few resources within herself to dispel that ennui which is the great foe of the votaries of fashion; and unconscious of any other sources of enjoyment, she plunged with all the zest of novelty into an incessant round of balls, operas, theaters, and masquerades. Her mind, by nature, was one of the noblest texture, and by suitable culture might have exulted in the appreciation of all that is beautiful and sublime in the world of nature and in the realms of thought. She loved the retirement of the Little Trianon. She loved, in the comparative quietude of that miniature palace, of that royal home, to shake off all the restraints of regal state, and to live with a few choice friends in the freedom of a private lady. Unattended she rambled among the flowers of the garden; and in the bright moonlight, leaning upon the arm of a female friend, she forgot, as she gazed upon the moon, and the stars, and all the somber glories of the night, that she was a queen, and rejoiced in those emotions common to every ennobled spirit. Here she often lingered in the midst of congenial joys, till the murmurs of courtiers drew her away to the more exciting, but far less satisfying scenes of fashionable pleasure. She often lamented bitterly, and even with tears, her want of intellectual cultivation, and so painfully felt her inferiority when in the society of ladies of intelligence and highly-disciplined minds, that she sought

to surround herself with those whose tastes were no more intellectual than her own. "What a resource," she once exclaimed, "amid the casualties of life, is a well-cultivated mind! One can then be one's own companion, and find society in one's own thoughts." Here, in her Little Trianon, she made several unavailing attempts to retrieve, by study, those hours of childhood which had been lost. But it was too late. For a few days, with great zeal and self-denial, she would persevere in secluding herself in the library with her books. But it was in vain for the Queen of France to strive again to become a school-girl. Those days had passed forever. The innumerable interruptions of her station frustrated all her endeavors, and she was compelled to abandon the attempt in sorrow and despair. We know not upon how trivial events the great destinies of the world are suspended; and had the Queen of France possessed a highly-disciplined mind — had she been familiar with the teachings of history, and been capable of inspiring respect by her intellectual attainments, it is far from impossible that she might have lived and died in peace. But almost the only hours of enjoyment which shone upon Maria while Queen of France, was when she forgot that she was a queen, and, like a village maiden, loitered through the gardens and the groves in the midst of which the Little Trianon was embowered.

The enemies of Maria had sedulously endeavored

to spread the report through France that she was still in heart an Austrian; that she loved only the country she had left, and that she had no affection for the country over which she was to reign as queen. They falsely and malignantly spread the report that she had changed the name of Little Trianon into Little Vienna. The rumor spread rapidly. It excited great displeasure. The indignant denials of Maria were disregarded. Thus the number of her enemies was steadily increasing.

Another unfortunate occurrence took place, which rendered her still more unpopular at court. Her brother Maximilian, a vain and foolish young man, made a visit to his sister at the court of Versailles, not traveling in his own proper rank, but under an assumed name. It was quite common with princes of the blood-royal, for various reasons, thus to travel. The young Austrian prince insisted that the first visit was due to him from the princes of the royal family in France. They, on the contrary, insisted that, as he was not traveling in his own name, and in the recognition of his own proper rank, it was their duty to regard him as of the character he had assumed, and as this was of a rank inferior to that of a royal prince, it could not be their duty to pay the first visit. The dispute ran high. Maria, seconded by the Abbé de Vermond, took the part of her brother. This greatly offended many of the highest nobility of the

realm. It became a family quarrel of great bitterness. A thousand tongues were busy whispering malicious accusations against Maria. Ribald songs to sully her name were hawked through the streets. Care began to press heavily upon the brow of the dauphiness, and sorrow to spread its pallor over her cheek. Her high spirit could not brook the humility of endeavoring the refutation of the calumnies urged against her. Still, she was too sensitive not to feel them often with the intensest anguish. Her husband was comparatively a stranger to her. He bowed to her with much civility when they met, but never addressed her with a word or gesture of tenderness, or manifested the least desire to see her alone. One evening, when walking in the garden of Little Trianon, he astonished the courtiers, and almost overpowered Maria with delightful emotions, by offering her his arm. This was the most affectionate act with which he had ever approached her. Such were the bridal days of Maria Antoinette.

CHAPTER III.

Maria Antoinette Enthroned.

Louis XV. seized with small-pox.— Flight of the courtiers.— The Marchioness du Pompadour.— Her dissolute character.— Debauchery of Louis XV.— He squanders the public revenue.— Remorse of the king.— The lamp at the window.— Death of Louis XV.— Indecent haste of the courtiers.— Emotions of the young king and queen.— Homage of the courtiers.— Burial of Louis XV.— The king and queen leave Versailles.— The coronation.— Enthusiasm of the people.— Maria's grief.— The king's estrangement.— The little peasant boy.— Becomes a monster of ingratitude.— The queen's traducers.— The heron's plume.— Vile slanders.— Profligate character of De Lauzun.— A life of pleasure.— Maria's imprudence.— Night adventure in a hackney-coach.— The gardens of Marly.— Their unrivaled splendor.— Maria's visits to Marly.— Heartless gayety.— Sunrise at Marly.— More food for slander.— Simple habits of the queen.— Horror of the courtiers and dowagers.— Sleigh riding.— Blind man's buff and other games.— Dramatic entertainments.— Increasing affection of the king.— Efforts to alienate the king's affections.— Agitation of the queen.— Maria's children.— Royal visitors.— Extravagant expenditures.— Rising discontents.— La Fayette and Franklin.— The people begin to count the costs.— Letter from the Empress Catharine. — The clouds thicken.

IN THE year 1774, about four years after the marriage of Maria Antoinette and Louis, the dissolute old king, Louis XV., in his palace at Versailles, surrounded by his courtiers and his lawless pleasures, was taken sick. The disease soon developed itself as the small-pox in its most virulent form.

The physicians, knowing the terror with which the conscience-smitten monarch regarded death, feared to inform him of the nature of his disease.

"What are these pimples," inquired the king, "which are breaking out all over my body?"

"They are little pustules," was the reply, "which require three days in forming, three in suppurating, and three in drying."

The dreadful malady which had seized upon the king was soon, however, known throughout the court, and all fled from the infection. The miserable monarch, hated by his subjects, despised by his courtiers, and writhing under the scorpion lash of his own conscience, was left to groan and die alone. It was a horrible termination of a most loathsome life.

The vices of Louis XV. sowed the seeds of the French Revolution. Two dissolute women, notorious on the page of history, each, in their turn, governed him and France. The Marchioness de Pompadour was his first favorite. Ambitious, shrewd, unprincipled, and avaricious, she held the weak-minded king entirely under her control, and spread throughout the court an influence so contaminating that the whole empire was infected with the demoralization. Upon this woman he squandered almost the revenues of the kingdom. The celebrated Parc au Cerf, the scene of almost unparalleled voluptuousness, was reared for her at an expense of twenty millions of dollars. After

her charms had faded, she still contrived to retain her political influence over the pliant monarch, until she died, at the age of forty-four, universally detested.

Madame du Barri, of whom we have before spoken, succeeded the Marchioness de Pompadour in this post of infamy. The king lavished upon her, in the short space of eight years, more than ten millions of dollars. For her he erected the Little Trianon, with its gardens, parks, and fountains, a temple of pleasure dedicated to lawless passion. The king had totally neglected the interests of his majestic empire, consecrating every moment of time to his own sensual gratification. The revenues of the realm were squandered in the profligacy and carousings of his court. The people were regarded merely as servants who were to toil to minister to the voluptuous indulgence of their masters. They lived in penury, that kings, and queens, and courtiers might revel in all imaginable magnificence and luxury. This was the ultimate cause of that terrible outbreak which eventually crushed Maria Antoinette beneath the ruins of the French monarchy. Louis XV., in his shameless debaucheries, not only expended every dollar upon which he could lay his hands, but at his death left the kingdom involved in a debt of four hundred millions of dollars, which was to be paid from the scanty earnings of peasants and artisans whose condition was hardly superior to that of the enslaved

laborers on the plantations of Carolina and Louisiana. But I am wandering from my story.

In a chamber of the palace of the Little Trianon we left the king dying of the confluent small-pox. The courtiers have fled in consternation. It is the hour of midnight, the 10th of May, 1774. The monarch of France is alone as he struggles with the king of terrors. No attendants linger around him. Two old women, in an adjoining apartment, occasionally look in upon the mass of corruption upon the royal couch, which had already lost every semblance of humanity. The eye is blinded. The swollen tongue can not articulate. What thought of remorse or terror may be rioting through the soul of the dying king, no one knows, and—no one cares. A lamp flickers at the window, which is a signal to those at a safe distance that the king still lives. Its feeble flame is to be extinguished the moment life departs. The courtiers, from the windows of the distant palace, watch with the most intense solicitude the glimmering of that midnight taper. Should the king recover, they dreaded the reproach of having deserted him in the hour of his extremity. They hope, so earnestly, that he may not live. Should he die, they are anxious to be the first in their congratulations to the new king and queen. The hours of the night linger wearily away as expectant courtiers gaze impatiently through the gloom upon that dim torch. The

horses are harnessed in the carriages, and waiting at the doors, that the courtiers, without the loss of a moment, may rush to do homage to the new sovereign.

The clock was tolling the hour of twelve at night when the lamp was extinguished. The miserable king had ceased to breathe. The ensuing scene no pen can delineate or pencil paint. The courtiers, totally forgetful of French etiquette, rushed down the stairs, crowded into their carriages, and the silence of night was disturbed by the clattering of the horses' hoofs, as they were urged, at their utmost speed, to the apartments of the dauphin.

There Maria Antoinette and Louis, with a few family friends, were waiting the anticipated intelligence of the death of their grandfather the king. Though neither of them could have cherished any feelings of affection for the dissolute old monarch, it was an hour to awaken in the soul emotions of the deepest melancholy. Death had approached, in the most frightful form, the spot on earth where, probably, of all others, he was most dreaded. Suddenly a noise was heard, as of thunder, in the ante-chamber of the dauphin. It was the rush of the courtiers from the dead monarch to bow at the shrine of the new dispensers of wealth and power. This extraordinary tumult, in the silence of midnight, conveyed to Maria and Louis the first intelligence that the crown of France had fallen upon their brows. Louis was then twenty-four years

of age, modest, timid, and conscientious. Maria was twenty, mirthful, thoughtless, and shrinking from responsibility. They were both overwhelmed, and, falling upon their knees, exclaimed, with gushing tears, "O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to govern."

The Countess de Noailles was the first to salute Maria Antoinette as Queen of France. She entered the private saloon in which they were sitting, and requested their majesties to enter the grand audience hall, where the princes and all the great officers of state were anxious to do homage to their new sovereigns. Maria Antoinette, leaning upon her husband's arm, and with her handkerchief held to her eyes, which were bathed in tears, received these first expressions of loyalty. There was, however, not an individual found to mourn for the departed king. No one was willing to endanger his safety by any act of respect toward his remains. The laws of France required that the chief surgeon should open the body of the departed monarch and embalm it, and that the first gentleman of the bed-chamber should hold the head while the operation was performed.

"You will see the body properly embalmed?" said the gentleman of the bed-chamber to the surgeon.

"Certainly," was the reply; "and you will hold the head?"

Each bowed politely to the other, without the exchange of another word. The body, unopened and unembalmed, was placed by a few under servants in a coffin, which was filled with the spirits of wine, and hurried, without an attendant mourner to the tomb. Such was the earthly end of Louis XV. In an hour he was forgotten, or remembered but to be despised.

At four o'clock of that same morning, the young king and queen, with the whole court in retinue, left Versailles, in their carriages, for Choisy. The morning was cold, dark, and cheerless. The awful death of the king, and the succeeding excitements, had impressed the company with gloom. Maria Antoinette rode in the carriage with her husband, and with one or two other members of the royal family. For some time they rode in silence, Maria, a child of impulse, weeping profusely from the emotions which moved her soul. But, ere long, the morning dawned. The sun rose bright and clear over the hills of France, and the whole beautiful landscape glittered in the light of the most lovely of spring mornings. Insensibly the gloom of the mind departed with the gloom of night. Conversation commenced. The mournful past was forgotten in anticipation of the bright future. Some jocular remark of the young king's sister elicited a general burst of laughter, when, by common consent, they wiped away their tears, banished all funereal looks, and, a merry party, rode merrily along,

over hill and dale, to a crown and a throne. Little did they dream that these sunny hours and this flowery path but conducted them to a dungeon and the guillotine.

The coronation soon took place at Rheims, with the greatest display of festive magnificence. The novelty of a new reign, with a youthful king and queen, elated the versatile French, and loud and enthusiastic were the acclamations with which Louis and Maria Antoinette were greeted wherever they appeared. They were both, for a time, very popular with the nation at large, though there was in the court a party hostile to the queen, who took advantage of every act of indiscretion to traduce her character and to expose her to ignominy. In these efforts they succeeded so effectually as to overwhelm themselves in the same ruin which they had brought upon their victim. A deep-seated but secret grief still preyed upon the heart of Maria. Though four years since her marriage had now passed away, she was still comparatively a stranger to her husband. He treated her with respect, with politeness, but with cold reserve, never approaching her as his wife. The queen, possessing naturally a very affectionate disposition, was extremely fond of children. Despairing of ever becoming a mother herself, she thought of adopting some pleasant child to be her playmate and friend. One day as she was riding in her car-

riage, a beautiful little peasant boy, about five years of age, with large blue eyes and flaxen hair, got under the feet of the horses, though he was extricated without having received any injury. As the grandmother rushed from the cottage door to take the child, the queen, standing up in her carriage, extended her arms to the old woman, and said,

"The child is mine. God has given it to me to rear and to cherish. Is his mother alive?"

"No, madame!" was the reply of the old woman. "My daughter died last winter, and left five small children upon my hands."

"I will take this one," said the queen, "and will also provide for all the rest. Will you consent?"

"Indeed, madame," exclaimed the cottager, "they are too fortunate. But I fear Jemmie will not stay with you. He is very wayward."

The postillion handed Jemmie to the queen in the carriage, and she, taking him upon her knee, ordered the coachman to drive immediately to the palace. The ride, however, was any thing but a pleasant one, for the ungoverned boy screamed and kicked with the utmost violence during the whole of the way. The queen was quite elated with her treasure; for the boy was extremely beautiful, and he was soon seen frolicking around her in a white frock trimmed with lace, a rose-colored sash, with silver fringe, and a hat decorated with feathers. I may here mention

that the petted favorite grew up into a monster of ingratitude, and became one of the most sanguinary actors in the scenes of terror which subsequently ensued.

One would think that the enemies of Maria Antoinette could hardly take advantage of this circumstance to her injury; but they atrociously affirmed that this child was her own unacknowledged offspring, whose ignominious birth she had concealed. They represented the whole adventure but a piece of trickery on her part, to obtain, without suspicion, possession of her own child. Such accusations were borne upon the wings of every wind throughout Europe, and the deeply-injured queen could only submit in silence.

Another little incident, equally trivial, was magnified into the grossest of crimes. The Duke de Lauzun appeared one evening at an entertainment with a very magnificent plume of white heron's feathers. The queen casually expressed her admiration of its beauty. A lady immediately reported to the duke the remarks of the queen, and assured him that it would be a great gratification to her majesty to receive a present of the plume. He, the next morning, sent the plume to the queen. She was quite embarrassed, being unwilling to accept the plume, and yet fearing to wound the feelings of the duke by refusing the present. She, on the whole, however, concluded to retain it, and wore it *once,* that she might

not seem to scorn the present, and then laid it aside. It is difficult to conceive how the queen could have conducted herself more discreetly in the affair. Such was the story of "The Heron's Plume." It was, however, maliciously reported through Paris that the queen was indecently receiving presents from gentlemen as her lovers. "The Heron's Plume" figured conspicuously in many a satire in prose and verse. These shafts, thrown from a thousand unseen hands, pierced Maria Antoinette to the heart. This same Duke de Lauzun, a man of noted profligacy, subsequently became one of the most unrelenting foes of the queen. He followed La Fayette to America, and then returned to Paris, to plunge, with the most reckless gayety, into the whirlpool of human passions boiling and whirling there. In the conflict of parties he became a victim. Condemned to death, he was imprisoned in the Conciergerie. Imbruted by atheism, he entered his cell with a merry song and a joke. He furnished a sumptuous repast for the prisoners at the hour appointed for his execution, and invited the jailers for his guests. When the executioners arrived, he smilingly accosted them. "Gentlemen, I am very happy to see you; just allow me to finish these nice oysters." Then very politely taking a decanter of wine, he said, "Your duties will be quite arduous to-day, gentlemen; allow me the pleasure of taking a glass of wine with you." Thus

merrily he ascended the cart, and beguiled the ride from the prison to the guillotine with the most careless pleasantries. Gayly tripping up the steps, he placed himself in the fatal instrument, and a smile was upon his lips, and mirthful words were falling upon the ears of the executioners, when the slide fell, and he was silent in death. That soul must indeed be ignoble which can thus enter the dread unseen of futurity.

There is no end to these acts of injustice inflicted upon the queen. The influences which had ever surrounded her had made her very fond of dress and gayety. She was devoted to a life of pleasure, and was hardly conscious that there was any thing else to live for. In fêtes, balls, theaters, operas, and masquerades, she passed night after night. Such was the only occupation of her life. The king, on the contrary, had no taste for any of these amusements. Uncompanionable and retiring, he lived with his books, and in his workshop making trinkets for children. Always retiring to rest at the early hour of eleven o'clock precisely, he left the queen to pursue her pleasures until the dawn of the morning, unattended by him. It was very imprudent in Maria Antoinette thus to expose herself to the whispers of calumny. She was young, inexperienced, and had no judicious advisers.

One evening, she had been out in her carriage,

and was returning at rather a late hour, the lady of the palace being with her, when her carriage broke down at her entrance into Paris. The queen and the duchess were both masked, and, stepping into an adjoining shop, as they were unknown, the queen ordered one of the footmen to call a common hackney-coach, and they, both entering, drove to the opera-house, with very much the same sense of the ludicrous in being found in so plebeian a vehicle, as a New York lady would feel on passing through Broadway in a hand-cart or on a wheel-barrow. The fun-loving queen was so entertained with the whimsical adventure, that she could not refrain from exclaiming, as soon as she entered the opera-house, to the intimate friends she met there, "Only think! I came to the opera in a hackney-coach! Was it not droll? was it not droll?" The news of the indiscretion spread. All Paris was full of the adventure. Rumor, with her thousand tongues, added innumerable embellishments. Neither the delicacy nor the dignity of the queen would allow her seriously to attempt the refutation of the calumny that, neglected by her husband, she had been out in disguise to meet a nobleman renowned for his gallantries.

Nothing can be more irksome than the frivolities of fashionable life. To spend night after night, of months and years, in an incessant round of the same trivial gayeties, so exhausts all the susceptibilities of enjoy-

ment that life itself becomes a burden. Louis XIV. had created for himself a sort of elysium of voluptuousness in the celebrated gardens of Marly. Spread out upon the gentle declivity of an extended hill were grounds embellished in the highest style of art, and intended to rival the garden of Eden itself in every conceivable attraction. Pavilions of gorgeous architecture crowned the summit of the hill. Flowers, groves, enchanting walks, and statues of most voluptuous beauty, fountains, lakes, cascades foaming over channels of whitest marble — all the attractions of nature and art were combined to realize the most fanciful dreams of splendor and luxury. Pleasure was the only god here adored; but, like all false gods, he but rewarded his votaries with satiety and disgust.

The queen, with her brilliant retinue, made a monthly visit to these palaces and pleasure-grounds, and with music, illumination, and dances, endeavored to beguile life of its cares. A noisy concourse, glittering with diamonds and all the embellishments of wealth, thronged the embowered avenues and the sumptuous halls. And while the young, in the mazes of the dance, and in the uneasy witchery of winning and losing hearts, were all engrossed, the old, in the still deeper but ignoble passion of desperate gaming, forgot gliding time and approaching eternity. But the spirit of Maria was soon weary of this heartless gayety. Each succeeding visit became more irksome,

and at last, in inexpressible disgust with the weary monotony of fashionable dissipation, she declared that she would never enter the gardens of Marly again. But she must have some occupation. What shall she do to give wings to the lagging hours?

"Has your majesty," timidly suggests a lady of the court, "ever seen the sun rise?"

"The sun rise!" exclaimed the queen; "no, never! What a beautiful sight it must be! What a romantic adventure! we will go to-morrow morning."

The plan was immediately arranged. The prosaic king would take no part in it. He preferred quietly to slumber upon his pillow. A few hours after midnight, the queen, with several gentlemen, and her attendant ladies, all in high glee, left the palace in their carriages to ascend the lofty eminence of the gardens of Marly to witness the sublime spectacle. Thousands of the humbler classes had already left their beds and commenced their daily toil, as the brilliant cavalcade swept by them on this novel excursion. It was, however, a freak so strange, so unaccountable, so contrary to any thing ever known before, that this nocturnal party became the theme of universal conversation. It was whispered that there must have been some mysterious wickedness connected with an adventure so marvelous. Groups upon the Boulevards inquired, "Why is the queen thus frolicking at midnight without her husband?" In a

few days a ballad appeared, which was sung by the vilest lips in the warehouses of infamy, full of the most malignant charges against the queen. Maria Antoinette was imprudent, very imprudent, and that was her only crime.

Still, the young queen must have amusements. She is weary of parade and splendor and seeks in simplicity the novelty of enjoyment. Dressed in white muslin, with a plain straw hat, and a little switch in her hand, she might often be seen walking on foot, followed by a single servant, through the embowered paths which surrounded the Petit Trianon. Through lanes and by-ways she would chase the butterfly, and pick flowers free as a peasant girl, and lean over the fences to chat with the country maids as they milked the cows. This entire freedom from restraint was etiquette in the court of Vienna; it was regarded as barbarism in the court of Versailles. The courtiers were amazed at conduct so unqueenly. The ceremony-stricken dowagers were shocked. Paris, France, Europe, were filled with stories of the waywardness, and eccentricities, and improprieties of the young queen. The loud complaints were poured so incessantly in the ear of Maria Theresa, that at last she sent a special embassador to Versailles, in disguise, as a spy upon her daughter. He reported, "The queen is imprudent, that is all."

There happened, in a winter of unusual inclemency,

a heavy fall of snow. It was a rare sight at Versailles. Maria Antoinette, reminded of the merry sleigh rides she had enjoyed in the more northern home of her childhood, was eager to renew the pleasure. Some antiquated sledges were found in the stables. New ones, gay and graceful, were constructed. The horses, with nodding plumes, and gorgeous caparisons, and tinkling bells, dazzled the eyes of the Parisians as they swept through the Champs Elysées, drawing their loads of lords and ladies enveloped in furs. It was a new amusement — an innovation. Envious and angry lips declared that "the Austrian, with an Austrian heart, was intruding the customs of Vienna upon Paris." These ungenerous complaints reached the ear of the queen, and she instantly relinquished the amusement.

Still the queen is weary. Time hangs heavily upon her hands. All the pleasures of the court have palled upon her appetite, and she seeks novelty. She introduces into the retired apartments of the Little Trianon, "blind man's buff," "fox and geese," and other similar games, and joins heartily in the fun and the frolic. "A queen playing blind man's buff!" Simpletons — and the world is full of simpletons — raised their hands and eyes in affected horror. Private dramatic entertainments were got up to relieve the tedium of unemployed time. The queen learns her part, and appears in the character and costume of a

peasant girl. Her genius excites much admiration, and, intoxicated with this new pleasure, she repeats the entertainment, and alike excels in all characters, whether comic or tragic. The number of spectators is gradually increased. Louis is not exactly pleased to see his queen transformed into an actress, even in the presence only of the most intimate friends of the court. Half jocosely, half seriously, amid the rounds of applause with which the royal actress is greeted, he hisses. It was deemed extremely derogatory to the dignity of the queen that she should indulge in such amusements, and every gossiping tongue in Paris was soon magnifying her indiscretions.

Eight years had now passed away since the marriage of Maria Antoinette, and still she was in name only, the wife of Louis. She was still a young lady, for he had never yet approached her with any familiarity with which he would not approach any young lady of his court. But about this time the king gradually manifested more tenderness toward her. He began really and tenderly to love her. With tears of joy, she confided to her friends the great change which had taken place in his conduct. The various troubles and embarrassments which began now to lower about the throne and to darken their path, bound their sympathies more strongly together. Strenuous efforts were made to alienate the king from the queen by exciting his jealousy. Maria was ac-

cused of the grossest immoralities, and insinuations to her injury were ever whispered into the ear of the king.

One morning Madame Campan entered the queen's chamber when she was in bed. Several letters were lying upon the bed by her side, and she was weeping as though her heart would break. She immediately exclaimed, covering her swollen eyes with her hands, "Oh! I wish that I were dead! I wish that I were dead! The wretches! the monsters! what have I done that they should treat me thus! it would be better to kill me at once." Then, throwing her arms around the neck of Madame Campan, she burst more passionately into tears. All attempts to console her were unavailing. Neither was she willing to confide the cause of her heartrending grief. After some time she regained her usual serenity, and said, with an attempted smile, "I know that I have made you very uncomfortable this morning, and I must set your poor heart at ease. You must have seen, on some fine summer's day, a black cloud suddenly appear, and threaten to pour down upon the country and lay it in waste. The lightest wind drives it away, and the blue sky and serene weather are restored. This is just the image of what has happened to me this morning.

Notwithstanding, however, these efforts of the malignant, the king became daily more and more strongly

attached to the queen. In the embarrassments which were gathering around him, he felt the support of her energetic mind, and looked to her counsel with continually increasing confidence. It was about nine years after their marriage when their first child was born. Three others were subsequently added to their family. Two, however, of the children, a son and a daughter, died in early childhood, leaving two others, Maria Theresa and Louis Charles, to share and to magnify those woes which subsequently overwhelmed the whole royal family.

During all these early years of their reign, Versailles was their favorite and almost constant abode. They were visited occasionally by monarchs from the other courts of Europe, whom they entertained with the utmost display of royal grandeur. Bonfires and illuminations turned night into day in the groves and gardens of those gorgeous palaces. Thousands were feasted in boundless profusion. Millions of money were expended in the costly amusements of kings, and queens, and haughty nobles. The people, by whose toil the revenues of the kingdom were furnished, looked from a humble distance upon the glittering throng, gliding through the avenues, charioted in splendor, and now and then a deep thinker, struggling against poverty and want, would thus soliloquize: "Why do we thus toil to minister to the useless luxury of these our imperious masters? Why

must I eat black bread, and be clothed in the coarsest garments, that these lords and ladies may glitter in jewelry and revel in luxury? Why must my children toil like bond slaves through life, that the children of these nobles may be clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day?" The multitude were bewildered by the glare of royalty. But here and there a sullen fish-woman, leading her ragged, half-starved children, would mumble and mutter, and curse the "Austrian," as the beautiful queen swept by in her gorgeous equipage. These discontents and portentous murmurs were spreading rapidly, when neither king, queen, nor courtiers dreamed of their existence.

A few had heard of America, its freedom, its equality, its fame even for the poorest, its competence. La Fayette had gone to help the Republicans crush the crown and the throne. Franklin was in Paris, the embassador from America, in garb and demeanor as simple and frugal as the humblest citizen, and all Paris gazed upon him with wonder and admiration. A few bold spirits began to whisper, "Let us also have no king." The fires of a volcano were kindling under the whole structure of French society. It was time that the mighty fabric of corruption should be tumbled into the dust. The splendor and the extravagance of these royal festivities added but

fuel to the flame. The people began to compute the expense of bonfires, palaces, equipages, crown jewels, and courtiers. It is extremely impertinent, Maria thought and said, for the people to meddle in matters with which they have no concern. Slaves have no right to question the conduct of their masters. It was the misfortune of her education, and of the influences which ever surrounded her, that she never imagined that kings and queens were created for any other purpose than to live in luxury. The Empress Catharine II. of Russia, as these discontents were loud and threatening, wrote to Maria Antoinette a letter, in which she says, "Kings and queens ought to proceed in their career undisturbed by the cries of the people, as the moon pursues her course unimpeded by the howling of dogs." This was then the spirit of the throne.

And now the days of calamity began to grow darker. Intrigues were multiplied, involving Maria in interminable difficulties. There were instinctive presentiments of an approaching storm. Death came into the royal palace, and distorted the form of her elder son, and by lingering tortures dragged him to the grave. And then her little daughter was taken from her. Maria watched at the couch of suffering and death with maternal anguish. The glowing heart of a mother throbbed within the bosom of Maria. The

heartlessness and emptiness of all other pursuits had but given intensity to the fervor of a mother's love. Though but twenty-three years of age, she had drained every cup of pleasure to its dregs. And now she began to enter upon a path every year more dark, dreary, and desolate.

CHAPTER IV.

The Diamond Necklace.

Remark of Talleyrand.— The Cardinal de Rohan.— Rohan's smuggling operations.— He is disgraced.— The Countess Lamotte.— The queen's jewelry. — Bœhmer, the crown jeweler.— The diamond ear-rings.— Change in the queen's life.— The diamond necklace.— The queen inspects the necklace.— Answer of their majesties.— Bœhmer's embarrassment.— His interview with the queen.— The queen's remarks. —Bœhmer's confusion. — Alleged disposal of the necklace.— Present to the king's son.— Bœhmer's note to the queen.— The queen's perplexity.— Bœhmer's interview with Madame Campan.— The necklace again.— The Cardinal de Rohan. — Indications of the plot.— Bœhmer's perplexity.— The cardinal's embarrassment.— Bœhmer's terror.— The queen's amazement.— The cardinal before the king and queen.— His agitation.— The queen's indignation.— The forged letter.— The cardinal's confused statements.— He is arrested.— Arrest of Madame Lamotte.— Great excitement.— The queen's anguish.— The cardinal's trial.— The cardinal's acquittal.— Chagrin of the king and queen.— Trial of the Countess Lamotte.— Her cool effrontery.— The countess found guilty.— Barbarous sentence.— Brutal punishment of the countess.— Her unhappy end.—Innocence of the queen.— Of De Rohan's criminality.— The three suppositions.— Influence of the first.— The third supposition.— Probably the true one.

About this time there occurred an event which, though apparently trivial, involved consequences of the most momentous importance. It was merely the fraudulent purchase of a necklace, by a profligate woman, in the name of the queen. The circumstances were such as to throw all France into agitation, and Europe was full of the story. "Mind that miserable affair of the necklace," said

Talleyrand; "I should be nowise surprised if it should overturn the French monarchy." To understand this mysterious occurrence, we must first allude to two very important characters implicated in the conspiracy.

The Cardinal de Rohan, though one of the highest dignitaries of the Church, and of the most illustrious rank, was a young man of vain and shallow mind, of great profligacy of character, and perfectly prodigal in squandering, in ostentatious pomp, all the revenues within his reach. He had been sent an embassador to the court of Vienna. Surrounding himself with a retinue of spendthrift gentlemen, he endeavored to dazzle the Austrian capital with more than regal magnificence. Expending six or seven hundred thousand dollars in the course of a few months, he soon became involved in inextricable embarrassments. In the extremity of his distress, he took advantage of his official station, and engaged in smuggling with so much effrontery that he almost inundated the Austrian capital with French goods. Maria Theresa was extremely displeased, and, without reserve, expressed her strong disapproval of his conduct, both as a bishop and as an embassador. The cardinal was consequently recalled, and, disappointed and mortified, he hovered around the court of Versailles, where he was treated with the utmost coldness. He was extremely anxious again to bask in the beams of royal favor. But the queen indignantly repelled all his advances. His proud

spirit was nettled to the quick by his disgrace, and he was ripe for any desperate adventure to retrieve his ruined fortunes.

There was, at the same time, at Versailles, a very beautiful woman, the Countess Lamotte. She traced her lineage to the kings of France, and, by her vices, struggled to sustain a style of ostentatious gentility. She was consumed by an insatiable thirst for recognized rank and wealth, and she had no conscience to interfere, in the slightest degree, with any means which might lead to those results. Though somewhat notorious, as a woman of pleasure, to the courtiers who flitted around the throne, the queen had never seen her face, and had seldom heard even her name. Versailles was too much thronged with such characters for any one to attract any special attention.

Maria Antoinette, in her earlier days, had been extremely fond of dress, and particularly of rich jewelry. She brought with her from Vienna a large number of pearls and diamonds. Upon her accession to the throne, she received, of course, all the crown jewels. Louis XV. had also presented her with all the jewels belonging to his daughter, the dauphiness, who had recently died, and also with a very magnificent collar of pearls, of a single row, the smallest of which was as large as a filbert. The king, her husband, had, not long before, presented her with a set of rubies and diamonds of a fine water, and with a pair of

bracelets which cost forty thousand dollars. Bœhmer, the crown jeweler, had collected, at a great expense, six pear-formed diamonds, of prodigious size. They were perfectly matched, and of the finest water. They were arranged as ear-rings. He offered them to the queen for eighty thousand dollars. The young and royal bride could not resist the desire of adding them, costly as they were, to her casket of gems. She, however, economically removed two of the diamonds which formed the tops of the clusters, and replaced them by two of her own. The jeweler consented to this arrangement, and received the reduced price of seventy-two thousand dollars, to be paid in equal instalments for five years, from the private purse of the queen. Still the queen felt rather uneasy in view of her unnecessary purchase. Murmurs of her extravagance began to reach her ears. Satiated with gayety and weary of jewels, as a child throws aside its play-things, Maria Antoinette lost all fondness for her costly treasures, and began to seek novelty in the utmost simplicity of attire, and in the most artless joys of rural life. Her gorgeous dresses hung neglected in their wardrobes. Her gems, "of purest ray serene," slept in the darkness of the unopened casket. The queen had become a mother, and all those warm and noble affections which had been diffused and wasted upon frivolities, were now concentrated with intensest ardor upon her children. A

new era had dawned upon Maria Antoinette. Her soul, by nature exalted, was beginning to find objects worthy of its energies. Rapidly she was groping her way from the gloom of the most wretched of all lives —a life of pleasure and of self-indulgence—to the true and ennobling happiness of benevolence and self-sacrifice.

Bœhmer, the jeweler, unaware of the great change which had taken place in the character of the queen, resolved to form for her the most magnificent necklace which was ever seen in Europe. He busied himself for several years in collecting the most valuable diamonds circulating in commerce, and thus composed a necklace of several rows, whose attractions, he hoped, would be irresistible to the queen. In the purchase of these brilliant gems, the jeweler had expended far more than his own fortune. For many of them he owed large sums, and his only hope of paying these debts was in effecting a sale to the queen.

Bœhmer requested Madame Campan to inform the queen what a beautiful necklace he had arranged, hoping that she might express a desire to see it. This, however, Madame Campan declined doing, as she did not wish to tempt the queen to incur the expense of three hundred and twenty thousand dollars, the price of the glittering bawble. Bœhmer, after endeavoring for some time in vain to get the gems exposed to the eye of the queen, induced a

courtier high in rank to show the superb necklace to his majesty. The king, now loving the queen most tenderly, wished to see her adorned with this unparalleled ornament, and sent the case to the queen for her inspection. Maria Antoinette replied, that she had already as many beautiful diamonds as she desired; that jewels were now worn but seldom at court; that she could not think it right to encourage so great an expense for such ornaments; and that the money they would cost would be much better expended in building a man-of-war. The king concurred in this prudent decision, and the diamonds were returned to the jeweler from their majesties with this answer: "We have more need of ships than of diamonds."

Bœhmer was in great trouble, and knew not what to do. He spent a year in visiting the other courts of Europe, hoping to induce some of the sovereigns to purchase his necklace, but in vain. Almost in despair, he returned again to Versailles, and proposed the king should take it, and pay for it partly in instalments and partly in life annuities. The king mentioned it again to the queen. She replied, that if his majesty wished to purchase the necklace, and keep it for their daughter, he might do so. But she declared that she herself should never be willing to wear it, for she could not expose herself to those censures for extravagance which she knew would be lavished upon her.

The jeweler complained loudly and bitterly of his misfortune. The necklace having been exhibited all over Europe, his troubles were a matter of general conversation. After several months of great perplexity and anxiety, Bœhmer succeeded in gaining an audience of the queen. Passionately throwing himself upon his knees before her, clasping his hands and bursting into tears, he exclaimed,

"Madame, I am disgraced and ruined if you do not purchase my necklace. I can not out-live my misfortunes. When I go hence I shall throw myself into the river."

The queen, extremely displeased, said, "Rise, Bœhmer! I do not like these rhapsodies; honest men have no occasion to fall upon their knees to make known their requests. If you were to destroy yourself, I should regret you as a madman in whom I had taken an interest, but I should not be responsible for that misfortune. I not only never ordered the article which causes your present despair, but, whenever you have talked to me about fine collections of jewels, I have told you that I should not add four diamonds to those I already possessed. I told you myself that I declined taking the necklace. The king wished to give it to me; I refused him in the same manner. Then never mention it to me again. Divide it, and endeavor to sell it piecemeal, and do not drown yourself. I am very angry with you for

acting this scene of despair in my presence, and before this child. Let me never see you behave thus again. Go!"

Bœhmer, overwhelmed with confusion, retired, and the queen, oppressed with a multitude of gathering cares, for some months thought no more of him or of his jewels. One day the queen was reposing listlessly upon her couch with Madame Campan and other ladies of honor about her, when, suddenly addressing Madame Campan, she inquired,

"Have you ever heard what poor Bœhmer did with his unfortunate necklace?"

"I have heard nothing of it since he left you," was the reply, "though I often meet him."

"I should really like to know how the unfortunate man got extricated from his embarrassments," rejoined the queen; "and, when you next see him, I wish you would inquire, as if from your own interest in the affair, without any allusion to me, how he disposed of the article."

In a few days Madame Campan met Bœhmer, and, in reply to her interrogatories, he informed her that the sultan at Constantinople had purchased it for the favorite sultana. The queen was highly gratified with the good fortune of the jeweler, and yet thought it very strange how the grand seignior should have purchased his diamonds at Paris. Matters continued in this state for some time, until the baptism of the

Duke d'Angoulême, Maria Antoinette's infant son. The king made his idolized boy a baptismal present of a diamond epaulette and buckles, which he purchased of Bœhmer, and directed him to deliver to the queen. As the jeweler presented them, he slipped into the queen's hand a letter, in the form of a petition, containing the following expression:

"I am happy to see your majesty in the possession of the finest diamonds in Europe; and I entreat your majesty not to forget me."

The queen read this strange note aloud, again and again exclaiming, "What does the man mean? He must be insane!" She quietly lighted the note at a wax taper which was standing near her, and burned it, remarking that it was not worth keeping. Afterward, as she reflected more upon the enigmatical nature of the communication, she deeply regretted that she had not preserved the note. She pondered the matter deeply and anxiously, and at last said to Madame Campan,

"The next time you see that man, I wish that you would tell him that I have lost all taste for diamonds; that I never shall buy another as long as I live; and that, if I had any money to spare, I should expend it in purchasing lands to enlarge the grounds at St. Cloud."

A few days after this, Bœhmer called upon Madame Campan at her country house, extremely uneasy at not having received any answer from the queen, and anxiously inquired if Madame Campan had no commission to him from her majesty. Madame Campan faithfully repeated to him all that the queen had requested her to say.

"But," rejoined Bœhmer, "the answer to the letter I presented to her! To whom must I apply for that?"

"To no one," was the reply; "her majesty burned your memorial, without even comprehending its meaning."

"Ah, madame!" exclaimed the man, trembling with agitation, "that is impossible; the queen knows that she has money to pay me."

"Money, M. Bœhmer!" replied the lady, "your last accounts against the queen were discharged long ago."

"And are you not in the secret?" he rejoined. "The queen owes me three hundred thousand dollars, and I am ruined by her neglect to pay me."

"Three hundred thousand dollars!" exclaimed Madame Campan, in amazement; "man, you have lost your senses! For what does she owe you that enormous sum?"

"For the necklace, madame," replied the jeweler, now pale and trembling with the apprehension that he had been deceived.

"The necklace again!" said Madame Campan. "How long is the queen to be teased about that necklace? Did not you yourself tell me that you had sold it at Constantinople?"

"The queen," added Bœhmer, "requested me to make that reply to all who inquired upon the subject, for she was not willing to have it known that she had made the purchase. She, however, had determined to have the necklace, and sent the Cardinal de Rohan to me to take it in her name."

"You are utterly deceived, Bœhmer," Madame Campan replied; "the queen knows nothing about your necklace. She never speaks even to the Cardinal de Rohan, and there is no man at court more strongly disliked by her."

"You may depend upon it, madame, that you are deceived yourself," rejoined the jeweler. "She must hold private interviews with the cardinal, for she gave to the cardinal six thousand dollars, which he paid me on account, and which he assured me he saw her take from the little porcelain secretary next the fireplace in her boudoir."

"Did the cardinal himself assure you of this?" inquired Madame Campan.

"Yes, madame," was the reply.

"What a detestable plot! There is not one word of truth in it; and you have been miserably deceived."

"I confess," Bœhmer rejoined, now trembling in every joint, "that I have felt very anxious about it for some time; for the cardinal assured me that the queen would wear the necklace on Whitsunday. I was, however, alarmed in seeing that she did not wear it, and that induced me to write the letter to her majesty. But what *shall* I do?"

"Go immediately to Versailles, and lay the whole matter before the king. But you have been extremely culpable, as crown jeweler, in acting in a matter of such great importance without direct orders from the king or queen, or their accredited minister."

"I have not acted," the unhappy man replied, "without direct orders. I have now in my possession all the promissory notes, signed by the queen herself; and I have been obliged to show those notes to several bankers, my creditors, to induce them to extend the time of my payments."

Instead, however, of following Madame Campan's judicious advice, Bœhmer, half delirious with solicitude, went directly to the cardinal, and informed him of all that had transpired. The cardinal appeared very much embarrassed, asked a few questions, and said but little. He, however, wrote in his diary the following memorandum: "On this day, August 3, Bœhmer went to Madame Campan's country-house, and she told him that the queen had never had his necklace, and that he had been cheated."

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Bœhmer was almost frantic with terror, for the loss of the necklace was his utter and irremediable ruin. Finding no relief in his interview with the cardinal, he hastened to Little Trianon, and sent a message to the queen that Madame Campan wished him to see her immediately. The queen, who knew nothing of the occurrences we have just related, exclaimed, "That man is surely mad. I have nothing to say to him, and I will not see him." Madame Campan, however, immediately called upon the queen, for she was very much alarmed by what she had heard, and related to her the whole occurrence. The queen was exceedingly amazed and perplexed, and feared that it was some deep-laid plot to involve her in difficulties. She questioned Madame Campan very minutely in reference to every particular of the interview, and insisted upon her repeating the conversation over and over again. They then went immediately to the king, and narrated to him the whole affair. He, aware of the many efforts which had been made to traduce the character of Maria Antoinette, and to expose her to public contumely, was at once convinced that it was a treacherous plot of the cardinal in revenge for his neglect at court.

The king instantly sent a command for the cardinal to meet him and the queen in the king's closet. He was, apparently, anticipating the summons, for he, without delay, appeared before them in all the pomp

of his pontifical robes, but was nevertheless so embarrassed that he could with difficulty articulate a sentence.

"You have purchased diamonds of Bœhmer?" inquired the king.

"Yes, sire," was the trembling reply.

"What have you done with them?" the king added.

"I thought," said the cardinal, "that they had been delivered to the queen."

"Who commissioned you to make this purchase?"

"The Countess Lamotte," was the reply. "She handed me a letter from the queen requesting me to obtain the necklace for her. I truly thought that I was obeying her majesty's wishes, and doing her a favor, by taking this business upon myself."

"How could you imagine, sir," indignantly interrupted the queen, "that I should have selected *you* for such a purpose, when I have not even spoken to you for eight years? and how could you suppose that I should have acted through the mediation of such a character as the Countess Lamotte?"

The cardinal was in the most violent agitation, and, apparently hardly knowing what he said, replied, "I see plainly that I have been duped. I will pay for the necklace myself. I suspected no trick in the affair, and am extremely sorry that I have had any thing to do with it."

He then took a letter from his pocket directed to the Countess Lamotte, and signed with the queen's name, requesting her to secure the purchase of the necklace. The king and queen looked at the letter, and instantly pronounced it a forgery. The king then took from his own pocket a letter addressed to the jeweler Bœhmer, and, handing it to De Rohan, said,

"Are you the author of that letter?"

The cardinal turned pale, and, leaning upon his hand, appeared as though he would fall to the floor.

"I have no wish, cardinal," the king kindly replied, "to find you guilty. Explain to me this enigma. Account for all these maneuvers with Bœhmer. Where did you obtain these securities and these promissory notes, signed in the queen's name, which have been given to Bœhmer?"

The cardinal, trembling in every nerve, faintly replied, "Sire, I am too much agitated now to answer your majesty. Give me a little time to collect my thoughts."

"Compose yourself, then, cardinal," the king added. "Go into my cabinet. You will there find papers, pens, and ink. At your leisure, *write* what you have to say to me."

In about half an hour the cardinal returned with a paper, covered with erasures, and alterations, and blottings, as confused and unsatisfactory as his verbal statements had been. An officer was then summoned

into the royal presence, and commanded to take the cardinal into custody and conduct him to the Bastile. He was, however, permitted to visit his home. The cardinal contrived, by the way, to scribble a line upon a scrap of paper, and, catching the eye of a trusty servant, he, unobserved, slipped it into his hand. It was a direction to the servant to hasten to the palace, with the utmost possible speed, and commit to the flames all of his private papers. The king had also sent officers to the cardinal's palace to seize his papers and seal them for examination. By almost superhuman exertions, the cardinal's servant first arrived at the palace, which was at the distance of several miles. His horse dropped dead in the court-yard. The important documents, which might, perhaps, have shed light upon this mysterious affair, were all consumed.

The Countess Lamotte was also arrested, and held in close confinement to await her trial. She had just commenced living in a style of extraordinary splendor, and had vast sums at her disposal, acquired no one knew how. It is difficult to imagine the excitement which this story produced all over Europe. It was represented that the queen was found engaged in a swindling transaction with a profligate woman to cheat the crown jeweler out of gems of inestimable value, and that, being detected, she was employing all the influence of the crown to shield her own rep-

utation by consigning the innocent cardinal to infamy. The enemies of the queen, sustained by the ecclesiastics generally, rallied around the cardinal. The king and queen, feeling that his acquittal would be the virtual condemnation of Maria Antoinette, and firmly convinced of his guilt, exerted their utmost influence, in self-defense, to bring him to punishment. Rumors and counter rumors floated through Versailles, Paris, and all the courts of the Continent. The tale was rehearsed in saloon and café with every conceivable addition and exaggeration, and the queen hardly knew which way to turn from the invectives which were so mercilessly showered upon her. Her lofty spirit, conscious of rectitude, sustained her in public, and there she nerved herself to appear with firmness and equanimity. But in the retirement of her boudoir she was unable to repel the most melancholy imaginings, and often wept with almost the anguish of a bursting heart. The sunshine of her life had now disappeared. Each succeeding day grew darker and darker with enveloping gloom.

The trial of the cardinal continued, with various interruptions, for more than a year. Very powerful parties were formed for and against him. All France was agitated by the protracted contest. The cardinal appeared before his judges in mourning robes, but with all the pageantry of the most imposing ecclesiastical costume. He was conducted into court with

much ceremony, and treated with the greatest deference. In the trying moment in which he first appeared before his judges, his courage seemed utterly to fail him. Pale and trembling with emotion, his knees bent under him, and he had to cling to a support to prevent himself from falling to the floor. Five or six voices immediately addressed him in tones of sympathy, and the president said, "His eminence the cardinal is at liberty to sit down, if he wishes it." The distinguished prisoner immediately took his seat with the members of the court. Having soon recovered in some degree his composure, he arose, and for half an hour addressed his judges, with much feeling and dignity, repeating his protestations of entire innocence in the whole affair.

At the close of this protracted trial, the cardinal was fully acquitted of all guilt by a majority of three voices. The king and queen were extremely chagrined at this result. During the trial, many insulting insinuations were thrown out against the queen which could not easily be repelled. A friend who called upon her immediately after the decision, found her in her closet weeping bitterly. "Come," said Maria, "come and weep for your queen, insulted and sacrificed by cabal and injustice." The king came in at the same moment, and said, "You find the queen much afflicted; she has great reason to be so. They were determined throughout this affair to see only an

ecclesiastical prince, a Prince de Rohan, while he is, in fact, a needy fellow, and all this was but a scheme to put money into his pockets. It is not necessary to be an Alexander to cut this Gordian knot." The cardinal subsequently emigrated to Germany, where he lived in comparative obscurity till 1803, when he died.

The Countess Lamotte was brought to trial, but with a painfully different result. Dressed in the richest and most costly robes, the dissolute beauty appeared before her judges, and astonished them all by her imperturbable self-possession, her talents, and her cool effrontery. It was clearly proved that she had received the necklace; that she had sold here and there the diamonds of which it was composed, and had thus come into possession of large sums of money. She told all kinds of stories, contradicting herself in a thousand ways, accusing now one and again another as an accomplice, and unblushingly declaring that she had no intention to tell the truth, for that neither she nor the cardinal had uttered one single word before the court which had not been false. She was found guilty, and the following horrible sentence was pronounced against her: that she should be whipped upon the bare back in the courtyard of the prison; that the letter V should be burned into the flesh on each shoulder with a hot iron; and that she should be imprisoned for life. The king and queen were as much displeased with the

terrible barbarity of the punishment of the countess as they were chagrined at the acquittal of the cardinal. As the countess was a descendant of the royal family, they felt that the ignominious character of the punishment was intended as a stigma upon them.

As the countess was sitting one morning in the spacious room provided for her, in the prison, in a loose robe, conversing gayly with some friends, and surrounded by all the appliances of wealth, an attendant appeared to conduct her into the presence of the judges. Totally unprepared for the awful doom impending over her, she rose with careless alacrity and entered the court. The terrible sentence was pronounced. Immediately terror, rage, and despair seized upon her, and a scene of horror ensued which no pen can describe. Before the sentence was finished, she threw herself upon the floor, and uttered the most piercing shrieks and screams. The tumult of agitation into which she was thrown, dreadful as it was, relaxed not the stern rigor of the law. The executioner immediately seized her, and dragged her, shrieking and struggling in a delirium of frensy, into the court-yard of the prison. As her eye fell upon the instruments of her ignominious and brutal punishment, she seized upon one of her executioners with her teeth, and tore a mouthful of flesh from his arm. She was thrown upon the ground, her garments, with relentless violence, were stripped from

her back, and the lash mercilessly cut its way into her quivering nerves, while her awful screams pierced the damp, chill air of the morning. The hot irons were brought, and simmered upon her recoiling flesh. The unhappy creature was then carried, mangled and bleeding, and half dead with torture, and terror, and madness, to the prison hospital. After nine months of imprisonment she was permitted to escape. She fled to England, and was found one morning dead upon the pavements of London, having been thrown from a third story window in a midnight carousal.

Such was the story of the Diamond Necklace. Though no one can now doubt that Maria Antoinette was perfectly innocent in the whole affair, it, at the time, furnished her enemies with weapons against her, which they used with fatal efficiency. It was then represented that the Countess Lamotte was an accomplice of the queen in the fraudulent acquisition of the necklace, and that the Cardinal de Rohan was their deluded but innocent victim. The horrible punishment of Madame Lamotte, who boasted that royal blood circulated in her veins, was understood to be in contempt of royalty, and as the expression of venomous feeling toward the queen. Both Maria Antoinette and Louis felt it as such, and were equally aggrieved by the acquittal of the cardinal and the barbarous punishment of the countess.

Whether the cardinal was a victim or an accom-

plice is a question which never has been, and now never can be, decided. The mystery in which the affair is involved must remain a mystery until the secrets of all hearts are revealed at the great day of judgment. If he was the guilty instigator, and the poor countess but his tool and victim, how much has he yet to be accountable for in the just retributions of eternity! There were three suppositions adopted by the community in the attempt to solve the mystery of this transaction:

1. The first was, that the queen had really employed the Countess Lamotte to obtain the necklace by deceiving the cardinal. That it was a trick by which the queen and the countess were to obtain the necklace, and, by selling it piecemeal, to share the spoil, leaving the cardinal responsible for the payment. This was the view the enemies of Maria Antoinette, almost without exception, took of the case; and the sentence of acquittal of the cardinal, and the horrible condemnation of the countess, were intended to sustain this view. This opinion, spread through Paris and France, was very influential in rousing that animosity which conducted Maria Antoinette to sufferings more poignant and to a doom more awful than the Countess Lamotte could by any possibility endure.

2. The second supposition was, that the cardinal

and the countess forged the signature of the queen to defraud the jeweler; that they thus obtained the rich prize of three hundred and twenty thousand dollars, intending to divide the spoil between them, and throw the obloquy of the transaction upon the queen. The king and queen were both fully convinced that this was the true explanation of the fraud, and they retained this belief undoubted until they died.

3. The third supposition, and that which now is almost universally entertained, was, that the crafty woman Lamotte, by forgery, and by means of an accomplice, who very much, in figure, resembled Maria Antoinette, completely duped the cardinal. His anxiety was such to be restored to the royal favor, that he eagerly caught at the bait which the wily countess presented to him. But, whoever may have been the guilty ones, no one now doubts that Maria Antoinette was entirely innocent. She, however, experienced all the ignominy she could have encountered had she been involved in the deepest guilt.

CHAPTER V.

The Mob at Versailles.

A gathering storm.— Condition of the French people.— Forces assembled at Versailles.— The populace rise upon the troops.— Terror and confusion. — Attack on the Bastille.— The Bastille taken.— Awful tumult.— Energy of the queen.— Resolution of the king.— The king visits Paris.— Strange cavalcade.— Painful suspense of the queen.— Return of the king.— The banquet at Versailles.— Enthusiastic loyalty.—News of the banquet.— Famine in Paris.— The mob marches to Versailles.— Heroic reply of the queen.— Violence of the mob.— The queen retires to rest.— Peril of the queen.— Her narrow escape.— The mob in the palace.— Heroic conduct of the queen.— The queen appears on the balcony.— Her composure.— The queen applauded.— The royal family taken to Paris.— An army of vagabonds.— The royal family grossly insulted.— The royal family in the Tuileries.— The queen's self-sacrificing spirit.— Rioting and violence.— The dauphin's question.— The king's explanation to his son.— Flight of the nobility.— Inflammatory placards.— The Duke of Orleans.— The Duke of Orlean's plans frustrated.— Rumors of invasion.— The leaders of the populace.— The queen urged to attend the theater.— Dignified reply of the queen.— Her unpopularity increases.— The queen's vigorous action.— Ultimate cause of the popular fury.— Transgressors visited in their children.

THE year 1789 opened upon France lowering with darkness and portentous storms. The events to which we have alluded in the preceding chapters, and various others of a similar nature, conspired to foment troubles between the French monarch and his subjects, which were steadily and irresistibly increasing. The great mass of the people, ignorant, degraded, and maddened by centuries of

oppression, were rising, with delirious energy, to batter down a corrupt church and a despotic throne, and to overwhelm the guilty and the innocent alike in indiscriminate ruin. The storm had been gathering for ages, but those who had been mainly instrumental in raising it were now slumbering in their graves. Mobs began to sweep the streets of Paris, frensied with rum and rage, and all law was set at defiance. The king, mild in temperament, and with no force of character, was extremely averse to any measures of violence. The queen, far more energetic, with the spirit of her heroic mother, would have quelled these insurrections with the strong arm of military power.

The king at last was compelled, in order to protect the royal family from insult, to encamp his army around his palaces; and long trains of artillery and of cavalry incessantly traversed the streets of Versailles, to prop the tottering monarchy. As Maria Antoinette, from the windows, looked down upon these formidable bands, and saw the crowd of generals and colonels who filled the saloons of the palace, her fainting courage was revived. The sight of these soldiers, called to quell the insurgent people, roused the Parisians to the intensest fury. "To arms! to arms! the king's troops are coming to massacre us," resounded through the streets of Paris in the gloom of night, in tones which caused the heart of every peaceful citizen to quake with terror. The infuriated

populace hurled themselves upon the few troops who were in Paris. Many of the soldiers of the king threw down their arms and fraternized with the people. Others were withdrawn, by order of Louis, to add to the forces which were surrounding his person at Versailles. Paris was thus left at the mercy of the mob. The arsenals were ransacked, the powder magazines were broken open, pikes were forged, and in a day, as it were, all Paris was in arms. Thousands of the noble and the wealthy fled in consternation from these scenes of ever-accumulating peril, and bands of ferocious men and women, from all the abodes of infamy, with the aspect and the energy of demons, ravaged the streets.

When the morning of the 14th of July, 1789, dawned upon the city, a scene of terror and confusion was witnessed which baffles all description. In the heart of Paris there was a prison of terrible celebrity, in whose dark dungeons many victims of oppression and crime had perished. The Bastille, in its gloomy strength of rock and iron, was the great instrument of terror with which the kings of France had, for centuries, held all restless spirits in subjection. Now, the whole population of Paris seemed to be rolling like an inundation toward this apparently impregnable fortress, resolved to batter down its execrated walls. "To the Bastille! to the Bastille!" was the cry which resounded along the banks of the Seine, and through

every street of the insurgent metropolis; and men, women, and boys poured on and poured on, an interminable host, choking every avenue with the agitated mass, armed with guns, knives, swords, pikes — dragging artillery bestrode by amazons, and filling the air with the clamor of Pandemonium. A conflict, fierce, short, bloody, ensued, and the exasperated multitude, many of them bleeding and maddened by wounds, clambered over the walls and rushed through the shattered gateways, and, with yells of triumph, became masters of the Bastile. The heads of its defenders were stuck upon poles upon the battlements, and the mob, intoxicated with the discovery of their resistless power, were beginning to inquire in what scenes of violence they should next engage. At midnight, couriers arrived at Versailles, informing the king and queen of the terrible insurrections triumphant in the capital, and that the royal troops every where, instead of being enthusiastic for the defense of the king, manifested the strongest disposition to fraternize with the populace. The tumult in Paris that night was awful. The rumor had entered every ear that the king was coming with forty thousand troops to take dreadful vengeance in the indiscriminate massacre of the populace. It was a night of sleeplessness and terror — the carnival of all the monsters of crime who thronged that depraved metropolis. The streets were filled with intoxication

and blasphemy. No dwelling was secure from pillage. The streets were barricaded, pavements torn up, and the roofs of houses loaded with the stones.

All the energies of the queen were aroused for a vigorous and heroic resistance. She strove to inspire the king with firmness and courage. He, however, thought only of concessions. He wished to win back the love of his people by favors. He declared openly that never should one drop of blood be shed at his command; and, with the heroism of endurance, which he abundantly possessed, and to prove that he had been grossly calumniated, he left Versailles in his carriage to go unprotected to Paris, into the midst of the infuriated populace. Just as he was entering his carriage on this dangerous expedition, he received intelligence that a plot was formed to assassinate him on the way. This, however, did not in the slightest degree shake his resolution. The agony of the queen was irrepressible as she bade him adieu, never expecting to see him again.

The National Assembly, consisting of nearly twelve hundred persons, was then in session at Versailles, the great majority of them sympathizing with the populace, and yet was alarmed in view of the lawless violence which their own acts had awakened, and which was every where desolating the land. As, on the morning of the 17th of July, the king entered his carriage with a slender retinue, and

with no military protection, to expose himself to the dangers of his tumultuous capital, this whole body formed in procession on foot and followed him. A countless throng of artisans and peasants flocked from all the streets of Versailles, and poured in from the surrounding country, armed with scythes and bludgeons, and joined the strange cavalcade. Every moment the multitude increased, and the road, both before and behind the king, was so clogged with the accumulating mass, that seven hours passed before the king arrived at the gates of the city. During all this time he was exposed to every conceivable insult. As Louis was conducted to the Hotel de Ville, a hundred thousand armed men lined the way, and he passed along under the arch of their sabers crossed over his head. The cup of degradation he was compelled to drain to its dregs.

While the king was absent from Versailles on this dreadful visit, silence and the deepest gloom pervaded the palace. The queen, apprehensive that the king would be either massacred or retained a prisoner in Paris was overwhelmed with the anguish of suspense. She retired to her chamber, and, with continually gushing tears, prepared an appeal to the National Assembly, commencing with these words: "Gentlemen, I come to place in your hands the wife and family of your sovereign. Do not suffer those who have been united in heaven to be put asunder

on earth." Late in the evening the king returned, to the inexpressible joy of his household. But the narrative he gave of the day's adventure plunged them all again into the most profound grief.

The visit of the king had no influence in diminishing the horrors of the scenes now hourly enacted in the French capital. His friends were openly massacred in the streets, hung up at the lamp-posts, and roasted at slow fires, while their dying agonies were but the subjects of derision. The contagion of crime and cruelty spread to every other city in the empire. The higher nobility and the more wealthy citizens began very generally to abandon their homes, seeing no escape from these dangers but by precipitate flight to foreign lands. Such was the state of affairs, when the officers of some of the regiments assembled at Versailles for the protection of the king had a public banquet in the saloon of the opera. All the rank and elegance which had ventured yet to linger around the court graced the feast with their presence in the surrounding boxes. In the midst of their festivities, their chivalrous enthusiasm was excited in behalf of the king and queen. They drank their health — they vowed to defend them even unto death. Wine had given fervor to their loyalty. The ladies showered upon them bouquets, waved their handkerchiefs, and tossed to them white cockades, the emblem of Bourbon power. And now the cry arose, loud, and long,

and enthusiastic, for the king and queen to come and show themselves to their defenders. The door suddenly opened, and the king and queen appeared. Enthusiasm immediately rose almost to frensy. The hall resounded with acclamations, and the king, entirely unmanned by these expressions of attachment, burst into tears. The band struck up the pathetic air, "O Richard! O my king! the world abandons you." There were no longer any bounds to the transport. The officers and the ladies mingled together in a scene of indescribable enthusiasm.

The tidings of this banquet spread like wild-fire through Paris, magnified by the grossest exaggerations. It was universally believed that the officers had contemptuously trampled the tri-colored cockade, the adopted emblem of popular power, under their feet; that they had sharpened their sabers, and sworn to exterminate the National Assembly and the people of Paris. All business was at a stand. No laborer was employed. The provisions in the city were nearly all consumed. No baker dared to appear with his cart, or farmer to send in his corn, for pillage was the order of the day. The exasperated and starving people hung a few bakers before their own ovens, but that did not make bread any more plenty. The populace of Paris were now starving, literally and truly starving. A gaunt and haggard woman seized a drum and strode through the streets, beating

it violently, and mingling with its din her shrieks of "Bread! bread!" A few boys follow her — then a score of female furies — and then thousands of desperate men. The swelling inundation rolls from street to street; the alarm bells are rung; all Paris composes one mighty, resistless mob, motiveless, aimless, but ripe for any deed of desperation. The cry goes from mouth to mouth, "To Versailles! to Versailles!" Why, no one knows, only that the king and queen are there. Impetuously, as by a blind instinct, the monster mass moves on. La Fayette, at the head of the National Guard knows not what to do, for all the troops under his command sympathize with the people, and will obey no orders to resist them. He therefore merely follows on with his thirty-five thousand troops to watch the issue of events. The king and queen are warned of the approaching danger, and Louis entreats Maria Antoinette to take the children in the carriages and flee to some distant place of safety. Others join most earnestly in the entreaty. "Nothing," replies the queen, "shall induce me, in such an extremity, to be separated from my husband. I know that they seek my life. But I am the daughter of Maria Theresa, and have learned not to fear death."

From the windows of their mansion the disorderly multitude were soon descried, in a dense and apparently interminable mass, pouring along through the

broad avenues toward the palaces of Versailles. It was in the evening twilight of a dark and rainy day. Like ocean tides, the frantic mob rolled in from every direction. Their shouts and revels swelled upon the night air. The rain began to fall in torrents. They broke into the houses for shelter; insulted maids and matrons; tore down every thing combustible for their watch fires; massacred a few of the body guard of the queen, and, with bacchanalian songs, roasted their horses for food. And thus passed the hours of this long and dreary night, in hideous outrages for which one can hardly find a parallel in the annals of New Zealand cannibalism. The immense gardens of Versailles were filled with a tumultuous ocean of half-frantic men and women, tossed to and fro in the wildest and most reckless excitement.

Toward morning, the queen, worn out with excitement and sleeplessness, having received from La Fayette the assurance that he had so posted the guard that she need be in no apprehension of personal danger, had retired to her chamber for rest. The king had also retired to his apartment, which was connected with that of the queen by a hall, through which they could mutually pass. Two faithful soldiers were stationed at the door of the queen's chamber for her defense. Hardly had the queen placed her head upon her pillow before she heard a dreadful clamor upon the stairs—the discharge of fire-arms,

the clashing of swords, and the shouts of the mob rushing upon her door. The faithful guard, bleeding beneath the blows of the assailants, had only time to cry to the queen, "Fly! fly for your life!" when they were stricken down. The queen sprang from her bed, rushed to the door leading to the king's apartments, when, to her dismay, she found that it was locked, and that the key was upon the other side. With the energy of despair, she knocked and called for help. Fortunately, some one rushed to her rescue from the king's chamber and opened the door. The queen had just time to slip through and again turn the key, when the whole raging mob, with oaths and imprecations, burst into the room, and pierced her bed through and through with their sabers and bayonets. Happy would it have been for Maria if in that short agony she might have died. But she was reserved by a mysterious Providence for more prolonged tortures and for a more dreadful doom.

A few of the National Guard, faithful to the king, rallied around the royal family, and La Fayette soon appeared, and was barely able to protect the king and queen from massacre. He had no power to effectually resist the tempest of human passion which was raging, but was swept along by its violence. Nearly all of the interior of the palace was ransacked and defiled by the mob. The bloody heads of the massacred guards, stuck upon pikes, were raised up to the

windows of the king, to insult and to terrify the royal family with these hideous trophies of the triumph of their foes.

At length the morning succeeding this dreadful night dawned lurid and cheerless. It was the 8th of October, 1789. Dark clouds overshadowed the sky, showers of mist were driven through the air, and the branches of the trees swayed to and fro before the driving storm. Pools of water filled the streets, and a countless multitude of drunken vagabonds, in a mass so dense as to be almost impervious, besieged the palace, having no definite plan or desire, only furious with the thought that now was the hour in which they could wreak vengeance upon aristocrats for ages of oppression. Muskets were continually discharged by the more desperate, and bullets passed through the windows of the palace. Maria Antoinette, in these trying scenes, indeed appeared queenly. Her conduct was heroic in the extreme. Her soul was nerved to the very highest acts of fearlessness and magnanimity. Seeing the mob in the court-yard below ready to tear in pieces some of her faithful guard whom they had captured, regardless of the shots which were whistling by her, she persisted in exposing herself at the open window to beg for their lives; and when a friend, M. Luzerne, placed himself before her, that his body might be her shield from the bullets, she gently, but firmly, with her hand, pressed him away,

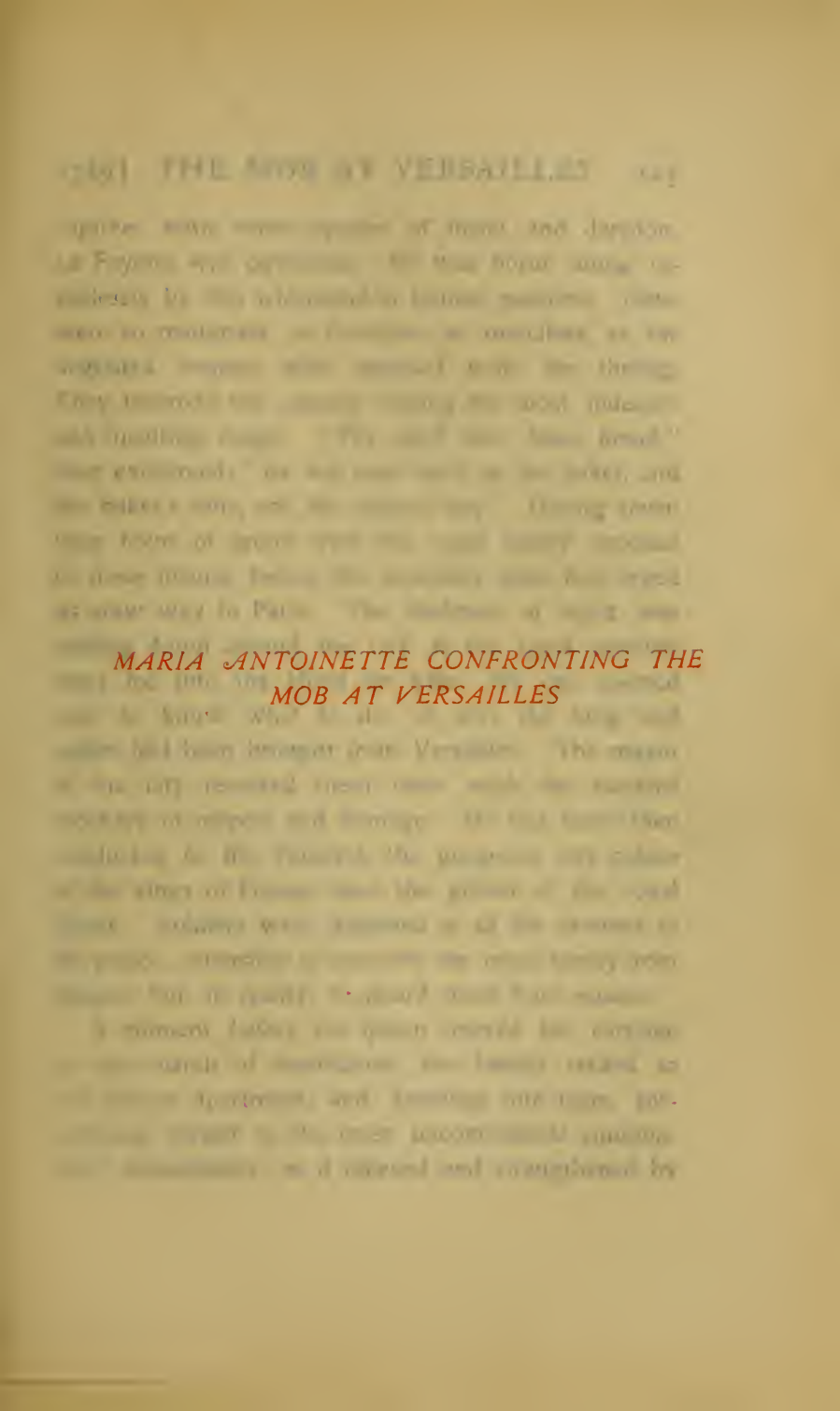
saying, "The king can not afford to lose so faithful a servant as you are."

At length the crowd began vigorously to shout "The queen! the queen!" demanding that she should appear upon the balcony. She immediately came forth, with her children at her side, that, as a mother, she might appeal to their hearts. The sight moved the sympathies of the multitude; and execrating, as they did, Maria Antoinette, whom they had long been taught to hate, they could not have the heart, in cold blood, to massacre these innocent children. Thousands of voices simultaneously shouted, "Away with the children!" Maria, apparently without the tremor of a nerve, led back her children, and again appearing upon the balcony alone, folded her arms, and, raising her eyes to heaven, stood before them, a self-devoted victim. The heroism of the act changed for a moment hatred to admiration. Not a gun was fired; there was a moment of silence, and then one spontaneous burst of applause rose apparently from every lip, and shouts of "Vive la reine! vive la reine!" pierced the skies.

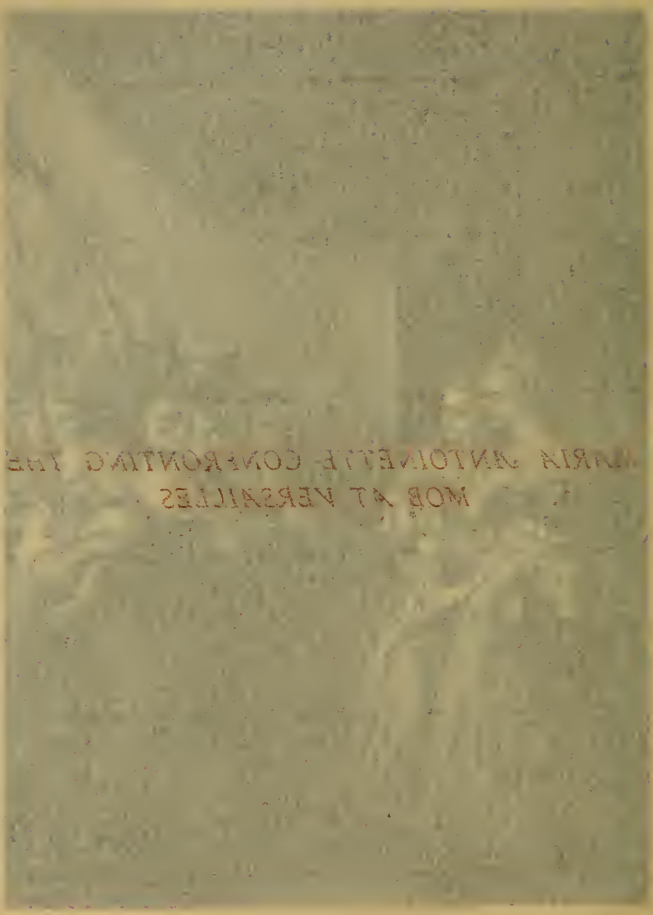
And now the universal cry ascends, "To Paris! to Paris!" La Fayette, with the deepest mortification, was compelled to inform the king that he had no force at his disposal sufficient to enable him to resist the demands of the mob. The king, seeing that he was entirely at the mercy of his foes, who were act-

ing without leaders and without plan, as the caprice of each passing moment instigated, said, "You wish, my children, that I should accompany you to Paris. I cannot go except on condition that I shall not be separated from my wife and family." To this proposal there was a tumultuous assent. At one o'clock, the king and queen, with their two children, entered the royal carriage to be escorted by the triumphant mob as captives to Paris. Behind them, in a long train, followed the carriages of the king's suite and servants. Then followed twenty-five carriages filled with the members of the National Assembly. After them came the thirty-five thousand troops of the National Guard; and before, behind, and around them all, a hideous concourse of vagabonds, male and female, in uncounted thousands, armed with every conceivable weapon, yelling, blaspheming, and crowding against the carriages so that they surged to and fro like ships in a storm. This motley multitude kept up an incessant discharge of fire-arms loaded with bullets, and the balls often struck the ornaments of the carriages, and the king and queen were often almost suffocated with the smoke of powder.

The two body guards, who had been massacred while so faithfully defending the queen at the door of her chamber, were beheaded, and, their gory heads affixed to pikes, were carried by the windows of the carriage, and pressed upon the view of the wretched



MARIA ANTOINETTE CONFRONTING THE MOB AT VERSAILLES



captives with every species of insult and derision. La Fayette was powerless. He was borne along resistlessly by this whirlwind of human passions. None were so malignant, so ferocious, so merciless, as the degraded women who mingled with the throng. They bestrode the cannon singing the most indecent and insulting songs. "We shall now have bread," they exclaimed; "for we have with us the baker, and the baker's wife, and the baker's boy." During seven long hours of agony were the royal family exposed to these insults, before the unwieldy mass had urged its slow way to Paris. The darkness of night was settling down around the city as the royal captives were led into the Hotel de Ville. No one seemed then to know what to do, or why the king and queen had been brought from Versailles. The mayor of the city received them there with the external mockery of respect and homage. He had them then conducted to the Tuileries, the gorgeous city palace of the kings of France, now the prison of the royal family. Soldiers were stationed at all the avenues to the palace, ostensibly to preserve the royal family from danger, but, in reality, to guard them from escape.

A moment before the queen entered her carriage for this march of humiliation, she hastily retired to her private apartment, and, bursting into tears, surrendered herself to the most uncontrollable emotion. Then immediately, as if relieved and strengthened by

this flood of tears, she summoned all her energies, and appeared as she had ever appeared, the invincible sovereign. Indeed, through all these dreadful scenes she never seemed to have a thought for herself. It was for her husband and her children alone that she wept and suffered. Through all the long hours of the night succeeding this day of horror, Paris was one boiling caldron of tumult and passion. Rioting and violence filled all its streets, and the clamor of madness and inebriation drove sleep from every pillow. The excitement of the day had been too terrible to allow either the king or the queen to attempt repose. The two children, in utter exhaustion, found a few hours of agitated slumber from the terror with which they had so long been appalled. But in the morning, when the dauphin awoke, being but six or eight years of age, hearing the report of musketry and the turmoil still resounding in the streets, he threw his arms around his mother's neck, and, as he clung trembling to her bosom, exclaimed, "O mother! mother! is to-day yesterday again?" Soon after, his father came into the room. The little prince, to whom sorrow had given a maturity above his years, contemplated his father for a moment with a pensive air, went up to him and said, "Dear father, why are your people, who formerly loved you so well, now, all of a sudden, so angry with you? And what have you done to irritate them so much?"

The king thus replied. "I wished, my dear child, to render the people still happier than they were. I wanted money to pay the expenses occasioned by wars. I asked the Parliament for money, as my predecessors have always done. Magistrates composing the Parliament opposed it, and said that the *people* alone had a right to consent to it. I assembled the principal inhabitants of every town, whether distinguished by birth, fortune or talents, at Versailles. That is what is called the *States-General.* When they were assembled, they required concessions of me which I could not make, either with due respect for myself, or with justice to you, who will be my successor. Wicked men, inducing the people to rise, have occasioned the excesses of the last few days. The *people* must not be blamed for them."

While these terrific scenes were passing in Paris and in France, the majority of the nobility were rapidly emigrating to find refuge in other lands. Every night the horizon was illumined by the conflagration of their chateaux, burned down by mobs. Many of them were mercilessly tortured to death. Large numbers, however, gathering around them such treasures as could easily be carried away, escaped to Germany on the frontiers of France. Some fifteen hundred of these emigrants were at Coblentz, organizing themselves into a military band, seeking assist-

ance from the Austrian monarchy, and threatening, with an overwhelming force of invasion, to recover their homes and their confiscated estates, and to rescue the royal family. The populace in Paris were continually agitated with the rumors of this gathering army at Coblentz. As Maria was an Austrian, she was accused of being in correspondence with the emigrants, and of striving to rouse the Austrian monarchy to make war upon France, and to deluge Paris with the blood of its citizens. Most inflammatory placards were posted in the streets. Speeches full of rancor and falsehood were made to exasperate the populace. And when the fish-women wished to cast upon the queen some epithet of peculiar bitterness, they called her "The Austrian."

It is confidently asserted that the mob was instigated to the march to Versailles by the emissaries of the Duke of Orleans, the father of Louis Philippe. The duke hoped that the royal family, terrified by the approach of the infuriated multitude, would enter their carriages and flee to join the emigrants at Coblentz. The throne would then be vacant, and the people would make the Duke of Orleans, who, to secure this result, had become one of the most violent of the Democrats, their king. It was a deeply-laid plot and a very plausible enterprise. But the king understood the plan, and refused thus to be driven from the throne of his fathers. He, however, en-

treated the queen to take the children and escape. She resolutely declared that no peril should induce her to forsake her husband, but that she would live or die by his side. During all the horrors of that dreadful night, when the palace at Versailles was sacked, the duke, in disguise, with his adherents, was endeavoring to direct the fury of the storm for the accomplishment of this purpose. But his plans were entirely frustrated. The caprice seized the mob to carry the king to Paris. This the Duke of Orleans of all things dreaded; but matters had now passed entirely beyond his control. Rumors of the approaching invasion were filling the kingdom with alarm. There was a large minority, consisting of the most intelligent and wealthy, who were in favor of the king, and who would eagerly join an army coming for his rescue. Should the king escape and head that army, it would give the invaders a vast accession of moral strength, and the insurgent people feared a dreadful vengeance. Consequently, there were great apprehensions entertained that the king might escape. The leaders of the populace were not yet prepared to plunge him into prison or to load him with chains. In fact, they had no definite plan before them. He was still their recognized king. They even pretended that he was not their captive — that they had politely, affectionately invited him, escorted him on a visit to his capital. They entreated the king and queen to show

that they had no desire to escape, but were contented and happy, by entering into all the amusements of operas, and theaters, and balls. But in the mean time they doubled the guards around them, and drove away their faithful servants, to place others at their tables and in their chambers who should be their spies.

But two days after these horrid outrages, in the midst of which the king and queen were dragged as captives to Paris, the city sent a deputation to request the queen to appear at the theater, and thus to prove, by participating in those gay festivities, that it was with pleasure that she resided in her capital. With much dignity the queen replied, "I should, with great pleasure, accede to the invitation of the people of Paris ; but time must be allowed me to soften the recollection of the distressing events which have recently occurred, and from which I have suffered so severely. Having come to Paris preceded by the heads of my faithful guards, who perished before the door of their sovereign, I can not think that such an entry into the capital ought to be followed by rejoicings. But the happiness I have always felt in appearing in the midst of the inhabitants of Paris is not effaced from my memory ; and I hope to enjoy that happiness again, so soon as I shall find myself able to do so."

The queen was, however, increasingly the object

of especial obloquy. She was accused of urging the king to bombard the city, and to adopt other most vigorous measures of resistance. It was affirmed that she held continual correspondence with the emigrants at Coblentz, and was doing all in her power to rouse Austria to come to the rescue of the king. Maria would have been less than the noble woman she was if she had not done all this, and more, for the protection of her husband, her children, and herself. She inherited her mother's superiority of mind and mental energy. Had Louis possessed her spirit, he might have perished more heroically, but probably none the less surely. Maria did, unquestionably, do every thing in her power to rouse her husband to a more energetic and manly defense. Generations of kings, by licentiousness, luxury, and oppression; by total disregard of the rights of the people, and by the haughty contempt of their sufferings and complaints, had kindled flames of implacable hatred against all kingly power. Circumstances, over which neither Louis nor Maria had any control, caused these flames to burst out with resistless fury around the throne of France, at the time in which they happened to be seated upon it. Though there never had been seated upon that throne more upright, benevolent, and conscientious monarchs, they were compelled to drain to the dregs the poisoned chalice which their ancestors had mingled. Perhaps this world presents no more affecting illustration

of that mysterious principle of the divine government, by which the transgressions of the parents are visited upon the children. Louis XIV., as haughty and oppressive a monarch as ever trod an enslaved people into the dust, died peacefully in his luxurious bed. His descendant, Louis XVI., as mild and benignant a sovereign as ever sat upon an earthly throne, received upon his unresisting brow the doom from which his unprincipled ancestors had escaped. It is difficult for us, in the sympathy which is excited for the comparatively innocent Maria Antoinette and Louis, to remember the ages of wrong and outrage by which the popular exasperation had been raised to wreak itself in indiscriminating atrocities. There is but one solution to these mysteries: "After death comes the judgment."

CHAPTER VI.

The Palace a Prison.

Condition of the royal family.— Ignominiously insulted.— The royal family surrounded by spies.— The queen refuses to escape.— Excuse for the emigrants.— Their plans.— Profligate women.— Their talk with the queen.— Bravos of the women.— Plan for the queen's escape.— Letter from the queen.— Her employments.— The king's unwillingness to flee.— Execution of the Marquis of Favras.— Imprudence of some of the queen's friends.— Her embarrassment.— The queen weeps.— Present to Madame Favras.— The king continues inactive.— Plan of Count d'Inisdal.— Indecision of the king.— The queen's disappointment.— Displeasure of Count d'Inisdal.— An alarm.— Attempts to assassinate the queen.— Removal to St. Cloud.— Another plan for flight.— It is abandoned.— Exhibitions of attachment.— Emotions of the queen.— The assassin in the garden.— Midnight interviews.— Deliberations of the king's friends.— Taunting gift.— The king's aunts leave France.— They are arrested.— Exciting debate.— The ladies permitted to depart.— The royal family start for St. Cloud.— They are compelled to return.— Preparations for flight.— Imprudence of the king and queen.— Garments for the children.— The queen's dressing case.— The queen's diamonds and jewels.— Faithful Leonard.

THE king and queen now found themselves in the gorgeous apartments of the Tuileries, surrounded with all the mockery of external homage, but incessantly exposed to the most ignominious insults, and guarded with sleepless vigilance from the possibility of escape. The name of the queen was the watchword of popular execration and rage. In the pride of her lofty spirit, she spurned all

apologies, explanations, or attempts at conciliation. Inclosing herself in the recesses of her palace, she heard with terror and resentment, but with an unyielding soul, the daily acts of violence perpetrated against royalty and all of its friends. All her trusty servants were removed, and spies in their stead occupied her parlors and her chambers. Trembling far more for her husband and her children than for herself, every noise in the streets aroused her apprehensions of a new insurrection. And thus, for nearly two years of melancholy days and sorrowful nights, the very nobleness of her nature, glowing with heroic love, magnified her anguish. The terror of the times had driven nearly all the nobility from the realm. The court was forsaken, or attended only by the detested few who were forced as ministers upon the royal family by the implacable populace. Every word and every action of Maria Antoinette were watched, and reported by the spies who surrounded her in the guise of servants. To obtain a private interview with any of her few remaining friends, or even with her husband, it was necessary to avail herself of private stair-cases, and dark corridors, and the disguise of night. The queen regretted extremely that the nobles and others friendly to royalty, should, in these hours of gathering danger, have fled from France. When urged to fly herself from the dangers darkening around her, she resolutely refused, declaring that she

would never leave her husband and children, but that she would live or die with them. The queen, convinced of the impolicy of emigration, did every thing in her power to induce the emigrants to return. Urgent letters were sent to them, to one of which the queen added the following postscript with her own hand:

"If you love your king, your religion, your government, and your country, return! return! return!

"MARIA ANTOINETTE."

The emigrants were severely censured by many for abandoning their king and country in such a crisis. But when all law was overthrown, and the raging mob swayed hither and thither at its will, and nobles were murdered on the high way or hung at lamp-posts in the street, and each night the horizon was illumined by the conflagration of their chateaux, a husband and father can hardly be severely censured for endeavoring to escape with his wife and children from such scenes of horror.

A year of gloom now slowly passed away, almost every moment of which was embittered by disappointed hopes and gathering fears. The emigrants, who were assembled at Coblentz, on the frontiers of Germany, were organizing an army for the invasion of France and the restoration of the regal power. The people were very fearful that the king and queen

might escape, and, joining the emigrants, add immeasurably to their moral strength. There were thousands in France, overawed by the terrors of the mob, who would most eagerly have rallied around the banners of such an invading army, headed by their own king. Louis, however, with his characteristic want of energy, was very unwilling to assume a hostile attitude toward his subjects, and still vainly hoped, by concessions and by the exhibition of a forgiving spirit, to reconcile his disaffected people.

On the morning after the arrival of the king and queen at the Tuileries, an occurrence took place highly characteristic of the times. A crowd of profligate women, the same who bestrode the cannon the day before, insulting the queen with the most abusive language, collected under the queen's windows, upon the terrace of the palace. Maria, hearing their outcries, came to the window. A furious termagant addressed her, telling her that she must dismiss all such courtiers as ruin kings, and that she must love the inhabitants of her good city. The queen replied,

"I have loved them at Versailles, and will also love them at Paris."

"Yes! yes!" answered another. "But you wanted to besiege the city and have it bombarded. And you wanted to fly to the frontiers and join the emigrants."

The queen mildly replied, "You have been told

so, my friends, and have believed it, and that is the cause of the unhappiness of the people and of the best of kings."

Another addressed her in German, to which the queen answered, "I do not understand you. I have become so entirely French as even to have forgotten my mother tongue."

At this they all clapped their hands, and shouted, "Bravo! bravo!" They then asked for the ribbons and flowers out of her hat. Her majesty unfastened them herself, and then tossed them out of the window to the women. They were received with great eagerness, and divided among the party; and for half an hour they kept up the incessant shout, "Maria Antoinette forever! Our good queen forever!"

In the course of a few weeks some of the devoted friends of the queen had matured a plan by which *her* escape could be, without difficulty, effected. The queen, whose penetrating mind fully comprehended the peril of her situation, replied, while expressing the deepest gratitude to her friends for their kindness, "I will never leave either the king or my children. If I thought that I alone were obnoxious to public hatred, I would instantly offer my life as a sacrifice. But it is the throne which is aimed at. In abandoning the king, no other advantage can be obtained than merely saving my life; and I will never be guilty of such an act of cowardice."

The following letter, which she wrote at this time to a friend, in reply to a letter of sympathy in reference to the outrage which had torn her from Versailles, will enable one to form a judgment of her situation and state of mind at that time.

"I shed tears of affection on reading your sympathizing letter. You talk of my courage; it required much less to go through the dreadful crisis of that day than is now daily necessary to endure our situation, our own griefs, those of our friends, and those of the persons who surround us. This is a heavy weight to sustain; and but for the strong ties by which my heart is bound to my husband, my children, and my friends, I should wish to sink under it. But you bear me up. I ought to sacrifice such feelings to your friendship. But it is I who bring misfortune on you all, and all your troubles are on my account."

The queen now lived for some time in much retirement. She employed the mornings in superintending the education of her son and daughter, both of whom received all their lessons in her presence, and she endeavored to occupy her mind, continually agitated as it was by ever-recurring scenes of outrage and of danger, by working large pieces of tapestry. She could not sufficiently recall her thoughts from the

anxieties which continually engrossed them to engage in reading. The king was extremely unwilling to seek protection in flight, lest the throne should be declared vacant, and he should thus lose his crown. He was ever hoping that affairs would soon take such a turn that harmony would be restored to his distracted kingdom. Maria Antoinette, however, who had a much more clear discernment of the true state of affairs, soon felt convinced that reconciliation, unless effected by the arm of power, was hopeless, and she exerted all her influence to rouse the king to vigorous measures for escape. While firmly resolved never to abandon her husband and her family to save her own life, she still became very anxious that all should endeavor to escape together.

About this time the Marquis of Favras was accused of having formed a plan for the rescue of the royal family. He was very hastily tried, the mob surrounding the tribunal and threatening the judges with instant death unless they should condemn him. He was sentenced to be hung, and was executed, surrounded by the insults and execrations of the populace of Paris. The marquis left a wife and a little boy overwhelmed with grief and in hopeless poverty. On the following Sunday morning, some extremely injudicious friends of the queen, moved with sympathy for the desolated family, without consulting the queen upon the subject, presented the widow and the or-

phan in deepest mourning at court. The husband and father had fallen a sacrifice to his love for the queen and her family. The queen was extremely embarrassed. What course could she with safety pursue? If she should yield to the dictates of her own heart, and give expression to her emotions of sympathy and gratitude, she would rouse to still greater fury the indignation of the populace who were accusing her of the desire to escape, and who considered this desire as one of the greatest of crimes. Should she, on the other hand, surrender herself to the dictates of prudence, and neglect openly to manifest any special interest in their behalf, how severely must she be censured by the Loyalists for her ingratitude toward those who had been irretrievably ruined through their love for her.

The queen was extremely pained by this unexpected and impolitic presentation; for the fate of others, far dearer to her than her own life, were involved in her conduct. She withdrew from the painful scene to her private apartment, threw herself into a chair, and, weeping bitterly, said to an intimate friend, "We must perish! We are assailed by men who possess extraordinary talent, and who shrink from no crime. We are defended by those who have the kindest intentions, but who have no adequate idea of our situation. They have exposed me to the animosity of both parties by presenting to me the

widow and the son of the Marquis of Favras. Were I free to act as my heart impels me, I should take the child of the man who has so nobly sacrificed himself for us, and adopt him as my own, and place him at the table between the king and myself. But, surrounded by the assassins who have destroyed his father, I did not dare even to cast my eyes upon him. The Royalists will blame me for not having appeared interested in this poor child. The Revolutionists will be enraged at the idea that his presentation should have been thought agreeable to me." The next day the queen sent, by a confidential friend, a purse of gold to Madame Favras, and assured her that she would ever watch, with the deepest interest, over her fortune and that of her son.

Innumerable plans were now formed for the rescue of the royal family, and abandoned. The king could not be roused to energetic action. His passive courage was indomitable, but he could not be induced to act on the offensive, and, still hoping that by a spirit of conciliation he might win back the affections of his people, he was extremely reluctant to take any measures by which he should be arrayed in hostility against them. Maria, on the contrary, knew that decisive action alone could be of any avail. One night, about ten o'clock, the king and queen were sitting in their private apartment of the Tuileries, endeavoring to beguile the melancholy hours by a game of cards. The

sister of the king, Madame Elizabeth, with a very pensive countenance, was kneeling upon a stool, by the side of the table, overlooking the game. A nobleman, Count d'Inisdal, devotedly attached to the fortunes of the royal family, entered, and, in a low tone of voice, informed the king and queen that a plan was already matured to rescue them that very night; that a section of the National Guard was gained over, that sets of fleet horses were placed in relays at suitable distances, that carriages were ready, and that now they only wanted the king's consent, and the scheme, at midnight, would be carried into execution. The king listened to every word without the movement of a muscle of his countenance, and, fixing his eyes upon the cards in his hand, as if paying no attention to what had been said, uttered not a syllable. For some time there was perfect silence. At last Maria Antoinette, who was extremely anxious that the king should avail himself of this opportunity for escape, broke the embarrassing silence by saying, "Do you hear, sir, what is said to us?" "Yes," replied the king, calmly, "I hear," and he continued his game. Again there was a long silence. The queen, extremely anxious and impatient, for the hour of midnight was drawing near, again interrupted the silence by saying earnestly, "But, sir, some reply must be made to this communication." The king paused for a moment, and then, still looking upon

the cards in his hand, said, "*The king can not consent to be carried off.*" Maria Antoinette was greatly disappointed at the want of decision and of magnanimity implied in this answer. She, however, said to the nobleman very eagerly, "Be careful and report this answer correctly, the king can not *consent* to be carried off." The king's answer was doubtless intended as a tacit consent while he wished to avoid the responsibility of participating in the design. The count, however, was greatly displeased at this answer, and said to his associates, "I understand it perfectly. He is willing that we should seize and carry him, as if by violence, but wishes, in case of failure, to throw all the blame upon those who are periling their lives to save him." The queen hoped earnestly that the enterprise would not be abandoned, and sat up till after midnight preparing her cases of valuables, and anxiously watching for the coming of their deliverers. But the hours lingered away, and the morning dawned, and the palace was still their prison. The queen, shortly after, remarking upon this indecision of the king, said, "We *must* seek safety in flight. Our peril increases every day. No one can tell to what extremities these disturbances will lead."

La Fayette had informed the king, that, should he see any alarming movement among the disaffected, threatening the exposure of the royal family to new acts of violence, he would give them an intimation of

their danger by the discharge of a few cannon from the battery upon the Pont Neuf. One night the report of guns from some casual discharge was heard, and the king, regarding it as the warning, in great alarm flew to the apartments of the queen. She was not there. He passed hastily from room to room, and at last found her in the chamber of the dauphin, with her two children in her arms. "Madame," said the king to her, "I have been seeking you. I was very anxious about you." "You find me," replied the queen pointing to her children, "at my station."

Several unavailing attempts were made at this time to assassinate the queen. These discoveries, however, seemed to cause Maria no alarm, and she could not be induced to adopt any precautions for her personal safety. Rarely did a day pass in which she did not encounter, in some form, ignominy or insult. As the heat of summer came on, the royal family removed to the palace of St. Cloud without any opposition, though the National Guard followed them, professedly for their protection, but, in reality, to guard against their escape. Here another plan was formed for flight. The different members of the royal family, in disguise, were to meet in a wood four leagues from St. Cloud. Some friends of the royal family, who could be perfectly relied upon, were there to join them. A large carriage was to be in attendance, sufficient to conduct the whole family. The

attendants at the palace would have no suspicion of their escape until nine o'clock in the evening, as the royal carriages were frequently out until that hour, and it would then take some time to send to Paris to call together the National Assembly at midnight, and to send couriers to overtake the fugitives. Thus, with fleet horses and fresh relays, and having six or seven hours the start, the king and queen might hope to escape apprehension. The queen very highly approved of this plan, and was very anxious to have it carried into execution. But for some unknown reason, the attempt was relinquished.

There were occasional exhibitions of strong individual attachment for the king and queen which would, for a moment, create the illusion that a reaction had commenced in the public mind. One day the queen was sitting in her apartment at St. Cloud, in the deepest dejection of spirits, mechanically working upon some tapestry to occupy the joyless and lingering hours. It was four o'clock in the afternoon. The palace was deserted and silent. The very earth and sky seemed mourning in sympathy with the mourning queen. Suddenly, an unusual noise, as of many persons conversing in an under tone, was heard beneath the window. The queen immediately rose and went to the window; for every unaccustomed sound was, in such perilous times, an occasion of alarm. Below the balcony, she saw a group of some

fifty persons, men and women, from the country, apparently anxious to catch a glimpse of her. They were evidently humble people, dressed in the costume of peasants. As soon as they saw the queen, they gave utterance to the most passionate expressions of attachment and devotion. The queen, who had long been accustomed only to looks and words of defiance and insult, was entirely overpowered by these kind words, and could not refrain from bursting into tears. The sight of the weeping queen redoubled the affectionate emotions of the loyal group, and, with the utmost enthusiasm, they reiterated their assurances of love and their prayers for her safety. A lady of the queen's household, apprehensive that the scene might arrest the attention of the numerous spies who surrounded them, led her from the window. The affectionate group, appreciating the prudence of the measure, with tears of sympathy expressed their assent, and with prayers, tears, and benedictions retired. Maria was deeply touched by these unwonted tones of kindness, and, throwing herself into her chair, sobbed with uncontrollable emotion. It was long before she could regain her accustomed composure.

Many unsuccessful attempts were made at this time to assassinate the queen. A wretch by the name of Rotondo succeeded one day in scaling the walls of the garden, and hid himself in the shrubbery, intending to stab the queen as she passed in her

usual solitary promenade. A shower prevented the queen from going into the garden, and thus her life was saved. And yet, though the assassin was discovered and arrested, the hostility of the public toward the royal family was such that he was shielded from punishment.

The king and queen occasionally held private interviews at midnight, with chosen friends, secretly introduced to the palace, in the apartment of the queen. And there, in low tones of voice, and fearful of detection by the numerous spies which infested the palace, they would deliberate upon their peril, and upon the innumerable plans suggested for their extrication. Some recommended the resort to violence; that the king should gather around him as many of his faithful subjects as possible, and settle the difficulties by an immediate appeal to arms. Others urged further compromise, and the spirit of conciliation, hoping that the king might thus regain his lost popularity, and re-establish his tottering throne. Others urged, and Maria coincided most cordially in this opinion, that it was necessary for the royal family to escape from Paris immediately, which was the focus of disaffection, and at a safe distance, surrounded by their armed friends, to treat with their enemies and to compel them to reasonable terms. The indecision of the king, however, appeared to be an insuperable obstacle in the way of any decisive action.

One day a delegation appeared before the royal family from the *conquerors of the Bastille,* with a new year's gift for the young dauphin. The present consisted of a box of dominoes curiously wrought from the stone of which that celebrated state prison was built. It was an ingenious plan to insult the royal family under the pretense of respect and affection, for on the lid of the box there was engraved the following sentiment:

"These stones, from the walls which inclosed the innocent victims of arbitrary power, have been converted into a toy, to be presented to you, monseigneur, as an homage of the people's love, and to teach you the extent of their power."

About this time, the two aunts of the king left France, ostensibly for the purpose of traveling, but, in reality, as an experiment, to see what opposition would be made to prevent members of the royal family from leaving the kingdom. As soon as their intention was known, it excited the greatest popular ferment. A vast crowd of men and women assembled at the palace, to prevent, if possible, with lawless violence, their departure. It was merely two elderly ladies who wished to leave France, but the excitement pervaded even the army, and many of the soldiers joined the mob in the determination that they should not be permitted to depart. The traces

of the carriages were cut, and the officers, who tried to protect the princesses, were nearly murdered. The whole nation was agitated by the attempts of these two peaceful ladies to visit Rome. When at some distance from Paris, they were arrested, and the report of their arrest was sent to the National Assembly. The king found the excitement so great, that he wrote a letter to the Assembly, informing them that his aunts wished to leave France to visit other countries, and that, though he witnessed their separation from him and his family with much regret, he did not feel that he had any right to deprive them of the privilege which the humblest citizens enjoyed, of going whenever and wherever they pleased. The question of their detention was for a long time debated in the Assembly. "What right," said one, "have we to prohibit these ladies from traveling." "We have a law," another indignantly replied, "paramount to all others — the law which commands us to take care of the public safety." The debate was finally terminated by the caustic remark of a member who was ashamed of the protracted discussion. "Europe," said he, "will be greatly astonished, no doubt, on hearing that the National Assembly spent four hours in deliberating upon the departure of two ladies who preferred hearing mass at Rome rather than at Paris." The debate was thus terminated, and the ladies were permitted to depart.

Early in the spring of 1791, the king and queen, who had been passing some time in Paris at the Tuileries, wished to return to their country seat at St. Cloud. Many members of the household had already gone there, and dinner was prepared for the royal family at the palace for their reception. The carriages were at the door, and, as the king and queen were descending, a great tumult in the yard arrested their attention. They found that the guard, fearful that they might escape, had mutinied, and closed the door of the palace, declaring that they would not let them pass. Some of the personal friends of the king interposed in favor of the insulted captives, and endeavored to secure for them more respectful treatment. They were, however, seized by the infuriated soldiers, and narrowly escaped with their lives. The king and queen returned in humiliation to their apartments, feeling that their palace was indeed a prison. They, however, secretly did not regret the occurrence, as it made more public the indignities to which they were exposed, and would aid in justifying before the community any attempts they might hereafter make to escape.

The king had at length become thoroughly aroused to a sense of the desperate position of his affairs. But the royal family was watched so narrowly that it was now extremely difficult to make any preparations for departure; and the king and queen, both

having been brought up surrounded by the luxuries and restraints of a palace, knew so little of the world, and yet were so accustomed to have their own way, that they were entirely incapable of forming any judicious plan for themselves, and, at the same time, they were quite unwilling to adopt the views of their more intelligent friends. They began, however, notwithstanding the most earnest remonstrances, to make preparations for flight by providing themselves with every conceivable comfort for their exile. In vain did their friends assure them that they could purchase any thing they desired in any part of Europe; that such quantities of luggage would be only an encumbrance; that it was dangerous, under the eyes of their vigilant enemies, to be making such extensive preparations. Neither the king nor queen would heed such monitions. The queen persisted in her resolution to send to Brussels, piece by piece, all the articles of a complete and extensive wardrobe for herself and her children, to be ready for them there upon their arrival. Madame Campan, the intimate friend and companion of the queen, was extremely uneasy in view of this imprudence; but, as she could not dissuade the queen, she went out again and again, in the evening and in disguise, to purchase the necessary articles and have them made up. She adopted the precaution of purchasing but few articles at any one shop, and of employing various seam-

stresses, lest suspicion should be excited. She had the garments made for the daughter of the queen, cut by the measure of another young lady who exactly resembled her in size. Gradually they thus filled one large trunk with clothing, which was sent to the dwelling of a lady, one of the friends of the queen, who was to convey it to Brussels.

The queen had a very magnificent dressing-case, which cost twelve hundred dollars. This she also determined that she could not leave behind. It could not be taken from the palace, and sent away out of the country, without attracting attention, and leading at once to the conviction that the queen was to follow it. The queen, in her innocent ignorance of mankind, thought that the people could be blinded like children, by telling them that she intended to send it as a present to the Archduchess Christina. However, by the most earnest remonstrances of her friends, she was induced only so far to change her plan as to consent that the *chargé d'affaires* from Vienna should ask her at her toilet, and in the presence of all around her, to have just such a dressing-case made for the archduchess. This plan was carried into execution, and the dressing-case was thus publicly made; but, as it could not be finished in season, the queen sent her own dressing-case, saying that she would keep the new one herself. It, however, did not deceive the spies who surrounded the queen.

They noticed all these preparations, and communicated them to the authorities. She also very deliberately collected all her diamonds and jewels in her private boudoir, and beguiled the anxious hours in inclosing them in cotton and packing them away. These diamonds, carefully boxed, were placed in the hands of the queen's hair-dresser, a man in whom she could confide, to be carried by him to Brussels. He faithfully fulfilled his trust. But one of the women of the queen, whom she did not suspect of treachery, but who was a spy of the Assembly, entered her boudoir by false keys when the queen was absent, and reported all these proceedings. The hair-dresser perished upon the scaffold for his fidelity. Let the name of Leonard be honored. The infamous informer has gone to oblivion, and we will not aid even to embalm her name in contempt.

CHAPTER VII.

The Flight.

Increasing excitement.— Inflammatory speech of Marat.— The king and queen resolve to fly.— Efforts of the king's brother.— Exasperation of the people.— Intention of the king.— Deliberation of the emigrants.— Dangers thicken.— The plan of flight.— The Marquis de Bouillé.— The king refuses to change his plan.— The Marquis d'Agoult.— The Count de Fersen.— His noble character.— The king and queen leave the palace.— The queen loses her way.— Departure from Paris.— Arrival at Bondy.— Departure of the Count de Fersen.— The passport.— Appearance of the fugitives.— An accident.— The journey renewed.— Emotions of the fugitives.— Suspicions excited.— Failure of the guard.— The king recognized. — The dragoons and National Guard.— The post-master's son.— He forms an ambush.— Arrival at Varennes.— Alarm of the king.— The royal family arrested.— The alarm given.— The king discovers himself.— His affecting appeal.— An affecting scene.— The royal group.— Appeal of the queen.— Telegraphic dispatch to Paris.— Intense agony of the queen.— Consternation in Paris.— The palace forced.— Insults to the royal family. — Measures to arrest the king.— The tumult subsides.

THE ferment in the National Assembly was steadily and strongly increasing. Every day brought new rumors of the preparation of the emigrants to invade France, aided by the armies of monarchical Europe, and to desolate the rebellious empire with fire and sword. Tidings were floating upon every breeze, grossly exaggerated, of the designs of the king and queen to escape, to join the avenging army, and to wreak a terrible vengeance

upon their country. Furious speeches were made in the Assembly and in the streets, to rouse to madness the people, now destitute of work and of bread. "Citizens," ferociously exclaimed Marat, "watch, with an eagle eye, that palace, the impenetrable den where plots are ripening against the people. There a perfidious queen lords it over a treacherous king, and rears the cubs of tyranny. Lawless priests there consecrate the arms which are to be bathed in the blood of the people. The genius of Austria is there, guided by the Austrian Antoinette. The emigrants are there stimulated in their thirst for vengeance. Every night the nobility, with concealed daggers, steal into this den. They are knights of the poniard — assassins of the people. Why is not the property of emigrants confiscated — their houses burned — a price set upon their heads? The king is ready for flight. Watch! watch! a great blow is preparing — is ready to burst; if you do not prevent it by a counter blow more sudden, more terrible, the people and liberty are annihilated."

The king and queen, in the apartments where they were virtually imprisoned, read these angry and inflammatory appeals, and both now felt that no further time was to be lost in attempting to effect their escape. It was known that the brother of the king, subsequently Charles X., was going from court to court in Europe, soliciting aid for the rescue of the illustrious

prisoners. It was known that the Emperor of Austria, brother of Maria Antoinette, had promised to send an army of thirty-five thousand men to unite with the emigrants at Coblentz in their march upon Paris. Every monarch in Europe was alarmed, in view of the instability of his own throne, should the rebellion of the people against the throne in France prove triumphant; and Spain, Prussia, Sardinia, Naples, and Switzerland had guaranteed equal forces to assist in the re-establishment of the French monarchy. It is not strange that the exasperation of the people should have been aroused, by the knowledge of these facts, beyond all bounds. And their leaders were aware that they were engaged in a conflict in which defeat was inevitable death.

The king had now resolved, if possible, to escape. He, however, declared that it never was his intention to join the emigrants and invade France with a foreign force. That, on the contrary, he strongly disapproved of the measures adopted by the emigrants as calculated only to increase the excitement against the throne, and to peril his cause. He declared that it was only his wish to escape from the scenes of violence, insult, and danger to which he was exposed in Paris, and somewhere on the frontiers of his kingdom to surround himself by his loyal subjects, and there endeavor amicably to adjust the difficulties which desolated the empire. The character of the king renders

it most probable that such was his intention, and such has been the verdict of posterity.

But there was another source of embarrassment which extremely troubled the royal family. The emigrants were deliberating upon the expediency of declaring the throne vacant by default of the king's liberty, and to nominate his brother M. le Comte d'Artois regent in his stead. The king greatly feared this moral forfeiture of the throne with which he was menaced under the pretense of delivering him. He was justly apprehensive that the advance of an invading army, under the banners of his brother, would be the signal for the immediate destruction of himself and family. Flight, consequently, had become his only refuge; and flight was encompassed with the most fearful perils. Long and agonizing were the months of deliberation in which the king and queen saw these dangers hourly accumulating around them, while each day the vigilance of their enemies were redoubled, and the chances of escape diminished.

The following plan was at last adopted for the flight. The royal family were to leave Paris at midnight in disguise, in two carriages for Montmédy, on the frontiers of France and Germany, about two hundred miles from Paris. This town was within the limits of France, so that the king could not be said to have fled from his kingdom. The nearest road and the great public thoroughfare led through the

city of Rheims; but, as the king had been crowned there, he feared that he might meet some one by whom he would be recognized, and he therefore determined to take a more circuitous route, by by-roads and through small and unfrequented villages. Relays of horses were to be privately conveyed to all these villages, that the carriages might be drawn on with the greatest rapidity, and small detachments of soldiers were to be stationed at important posts, to resist any interruption which might possibly be attempted by the peasantry. The king also had a large carriage built privately, expressly for himself and his family, while certain necessary attendants were to follow in another.

The Marquis de Bouillé, who commanded a portion of the troops still faithful to the king, was the prime confidant and helper in this movement. He earnestly, but in vain, endeavored to induce the king to make some alterations in this plan. He entreated him, in the first place, not to excite suspicion by the use of a peculiar carriage constructed for his own use, but to make use of common carriages such as were daily seen traversing the roads. He also besought him to travel by the common high way, where relays of horses were at all times ready by night and by day. He represented to the king that, should he take the unfrequented route, it would be necessary to send relays of horses beforehand to all these little villages;

that so unusual an occurrence would attract attention and provoke inquiry. He urged also upon the king that detachments of troops sent along these solitary roads would excite curiosity, and would inevitably create suspicion. The king, however, self-willed, refused to heed these remonstrances, and persisted in his own plan. He, however, consented to take with him the Marquis d'Agoult, a man of great firmness and energy, to advise and assist in the unforeseen accidents which might embarrass the enterprise. He also reluctantly consented to ask the Emperor of Austria to make a threatening movement toward the frontier, which would be an excuse for the movement through these villages of detachments of French troops.

These arrangements made, the Marquis de Bouillé sent a faithful officer to take an accurate survey of the road, and present a report to the king. He then, under various pretexts, removed to a distance those troops who were known to be disaffected to the royal cause, and endeavored to gather along the line of flight those in whose loyalty he thought he could confide.

At the palace of the Tuileries, the secret of the contemplated flight had been confided only to the king, the queen, the Princess Elizabeth, sister of the king, and two or three faithful attendants. The Count de Fersen, a most noble-spirited young gentleman

from Sweden, most cheerfully periled his life in undertaking the exterior arrangements of this hazardous enterprise. He had often been admitted, in the happy days of Maria Antoinette, to the parties and fêtes which lent wings to the hours at the Little Trianon, and chivalrous admiration of her person and character induced him to consecrate himself with the most passionate devotion to her cause. Three soldiers of the body-guard, Valorg, Monstrei, and Maldan, were also received into confidence, and unhesitatingly engaged in an enterprise in which success was extremely problematical, and failure was certain death. They, disguised as servants, were to mount behind the carriages, and protect the royal family at all risks.

The night of the 20th of June at length arrived, and the hearts of the royal inmates of the Tuileries throbbed violently as the hour approached which was to decide their destiny. At the hour of eleven, according to their custom, they took leave of those friends who were in the habit of paying their respects to them at that time, and dismissed their attendants as if to retire to their beds. As soon as they were alone, they hastily, and with trembling hands, dressed themselves in the disguises which had been prepared for their journey, and by different doors and at different times left the palace. It was the dark hour of midnight. The lights glimmered feebly from the lamps, but still there was the bustle of crowds com-

ing and going in those ever-busy streets. The queen, in her traveling dress, leaning upon the arm of one of the body-guard, and leading her little daughter Maria Theresa by the hand, passed out at a door in the rear of the palace, and hastened through the Place du Carrousel, and, losing her way, crossed the Seine by the Pont Royal, and wandered for some time through the darkest and most obscure streets before she found the two hackney-coaches which were waiting for them at the Quai des Théatins. The king left the palace in a similar manner, leading his son Louis by the hand. He also lost his way in the unfrequented streets through which it was necessary for him to pass. The queen waited for half an hour in the most intense anxiety before the king arrived. At last, however, all were assembled, and, entering the hackney-coaches, the Count de Fersen, disguised as a coachman, leaped up on the box, and the wheels rattled over the pavements of the city as the royal family fled in this obscurity from their palace and their throne. The emotions excited in the bosoms of the illustrious fugitives were too intense, and the perils to which they were exposed too dreadful, to allow of any conversation. Grasping each other's hands, they sat in silence through the dark hours, with the gloomy remembrance of the past oppressing their spirits, and with the dread that the light of morning might introduce them to new disasters. A

couple of hours of silence and gloom passed slowly away, and the coaches arrived at Bondy, the first stage from Paris. The gray dawn of the morning was just appearing in the east as they hurriedly changed their coaches for the large traveling carriage the king had ordered and another coach which there awaited them. Count de Fersen kissed the hands of the king and queen, and leaving them, according to previous arrangements, with their attendants, hastened the same night by another route to Brussels, in order to rejoin the royal family at a later period.

The king's carriages now rolled rapidly on toward Chalons, an important town on their route. The queen had assumed the title and character of a German baroness returning to Frankfort with her two children; the king was her valet de chambre, the Princess Elizabeth, the king's sister, was her waiting-maid. The passport was made out in the following manner:

"Permit to pass Madame the Baroness of Korf, who is returning to Frankfort with her two children, her waiting-maid, her valet de chambre, and three domestics.

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs.

"MONTMORIN."

At each post-house on the road relays of eight horses were waiting for the royal carriages. When

the sun rose over the hills of France they were already many leagues from the capital, and as the carriages rattled furiously along over hill and dale, the unwonted spectacle on that unfrequented road attracted much attention. At every little village where they stopped for an exchange of horses, the villagers gathered in groups around the carriages, admiring the imposing spectacle. The king was fully aware that the knowledge of his escape could not long be concealed from the authorities at Paris, and that all the resources of his foes would immediately be put into requisition to secure his arrest. They therefore pressed on with the utmost speed, that they might get as far as possible on their way before the pursuit should commence. The remarkable size and structure of the carriage which the king had caused to be constructed, the number of horses drawing the carriages, the martial figures and commanding features of the three body-guard strangely contrasting with the livery of menials, the portly appearance and kingly countenance of Louis, who sat in a corner of the carriage in the garb of a valet de chambre, all these circumstances conspired to excite suspicion and to magnify the dangers of the royal family. They, however, proceeded without interruption until they arrived at the little town of Montmirail, near Chalons, where, unfortunately, one of the carriages broke down, and they

were detained an hour in making repairs. It was an hour of intense anxiety, for they knew that every moment was increasing the probability of their capture. The carriage, however, was repaired, and they started again on their flight. The sun shone brightly upon the fields, which were blooming in all the verdure of the opening summer. The seclusion of the region through which they were passing was enchanting to their eyes, weary of looking out upon the tumultuous mobs of Paris. The children, worn out by the exhaustion of a sleepless night, were peacefully slumbering in their parents' arms. Each revolution of the wheels was bringing them nearer to the frontier, where their faithful friend, M. de Bouillé, was waiting, with his loyal troops, to receive them. A gleam of hope and joy now rose in their bosoms; and, as they entered the town of Chalons, at half past three o'clock in the afternoon, smiles of joy lighted their countenances, and they began to congratulate themselves that they were fast approaching the end of their dangers and their sufferings. As the horses were changing, a group of idlers gathered around the carriages. The king, emboldened by his distance from the capital, imprudently looked out at the window of the carriage. The post-master, who had been in Paris, instantly recognized the king. He, however, without the manifestation of the least sur-

prise, aided in harnessing the horses, and ordered the postillion to drive on. He would not be an accomplice in arresting the escape of the king.

At the next relay, at Point Sommeville, quite a concourse gathered around the carriages, and the populace appeared uneasy and suspicious. They watched the travelers very narrowly, and were observed to be whispering with one another, and making ominous signs. No one, however, ventured to make any movement to detain the carriages, and they proceeded on their way. A detachment of fifty hussars had been appointed to meet the king at this spot. They were there at the assigned moment. The breaking down of the carriage, however, detained the king, and the hussars, observing the suspicions their presence was awaking, departed half an hour before the arrival of the carriages. Had the king arrived but one half hour sooner, the safety of the royal family would have been secured. The king was surprised and alarmed at not meeting the guard he had anticipated, and drove rapidly on to the next relay at Sainte Menehould. It was now half past seven o'clock of a beautiful summer's evening. The sun was just sinking below the horizon, but the broad light still lingered upon the valleys and the hills. As they were changing the horses, the king, alarmed at not meeting the friends he expected, put his head out of the window to see if any friend was

there who could inform him why the detachments were detained. The son of the post-master instantly recognized the king by his resemblance to the imprint upon the coins in circulation. The report was immediately whispered about among the crowd, but there was not sufficient force, upon the spur of the moment, to venture to detain the carriages. There was in the town a detachment of troops, friendly to the king, who would immediately have come to his rescue had the people attempted to arrest him. It was whispered among the dragoons that the king was in the carriage, and the commandant immediately ordered the troops to mount their horses and follow to protect the royal family; but the National Guard in the place, far more numerous, surrounded the barracks, closed the stables, and would not allow the soldiers to depart.

The king, entirely unconscious of these movements, was pursuing his course toward the next relay. Young Drouet, however, the post-master's son, had immediately, upon recognizing the king, saddled his fleetest horse, and started at his utmost speed for the post-house at Varennes, that he might, before the king's arrival, inform the municipal authorities of his suspicions, and collect a sufficient force to detain the travelers. One of the dragoons, witnessing the precipitate departure of Drouet, and suspecting its cause, succeeded in mounting his horse, and pursued him,

resolved to overtake him, and either detain him until the king had passed, or take his life. Drouet, however, perceiving that he was pursued, plunged into the wood, with every by-path of which he was familiar, and, in the darkness of the night, eluded his pursuer, and arrived at Varennes, by a very much shorter route than the carriage road, nearly two hours before the king. He immediately communicated to a band of young men his suspicions, and they, emulous of the glory of arresting their sovereign, did not inform the authorities or arouse the populace, but, arming themselves, they formed an ambush to seize the persons of the travelers. It was half past seven o'clock of a cold, dark, and gloomy night, when the royal family, exhausted with twenty-four hours of incessant anxiety and fatigue, arrived at the few straggling houses in the outskirts of the village of Varennes. They there confidently expected to find an escort and a relay of horses provided by their careful friend, M. Bouillé.

A small river passes through the little town of Varennes, dividing it into two portions, the upper and lower town, which villages are connected by a bridge crossing the stream. The king, by some misunderstanding, expected to find the relay upon the side of the river before crossing the bridge. But the fresh horses had been judiciously placed upon the other side of the river, so that the carriages, having crossed

the bridge at full speed, could more easily, with a change of horses, hasten unmolested on their way. The king and queen, greatly alarmed at finding no horses, left the carriage, and wandered about in sad perplexity for half an hour, through the dark, silent, and deserted streets. In most painful anxiety, they returned to their carriages, and decided to cross the river, hoping to find the horses and their friends in the upper town. The bridge was a narrow stone structure, with its entrance surmounted by a gloomy, massive arch, upon which was reared a tower, a relic of the feudal system, which had braved the storms of centuries. Here, under this dark archway, Drouet and his companions had formed their ambuscade. The horses had hardly entered the gloomy pass, when they were stopped by a cart which had been overturned, and five or six armed men, seizing their heads, ordered the travelers to alight and exhibit their passports. The three body-guard seized their arms, and were ready to sacrifice their lives in the attempt to force the passage, but the king would allow no blood to be shed. The horses were turned round by the captors, and the carriages were escorted by Drouet and his comrades to the door of a grocer named Sausse, who was the humble mayor of this obscure town. At the same time, some of the party rushed to the church, mounted the belfry, and rang the alarm bell. The solemn booming of that midnight bell roused the

affrighted inhabitants from their pillows, and soon the whole population was gathered around the carriages and about the door of the grocer's shop. It was in vain for the king to deny his rank. His marked features betrayed him. Clamor and confusion filled the night air. Men, women and children were running to and fro; the populace were arming, to be prepared for any emergency; and the royal family were worn out by sleeplessness and toil. At last Louis made a bold appeal to the magnanimity of his foes. Taking the hand of Sausse, he said,

"Yes! I am your king, and in your hands I place my destiny, and that of my wife, my sister, and my children. Our lives and the fate of the empire depend upon you. Permit me to continue my journey. I have no design of leaving the country. I am but going to the midst of a part of the army, and in a French town, to regain my real liberty, of which the factions at Paris deprive me. From thence I wish to make terms with the Assembly, who, like myself, are held in subjection through fear. I am not about to destroy but to save and to secure the Constitution. If you detain me, I myself, France, all, are lost. I conjure you, as a father, as a man, as a citizen, leave the road free to us. In an hour we shall be saved, and with us France is saved. And, if you have any respect for one whom you profess to regard as your

master, I command you, as your king, to permit us to depart."

The appeal touched the heart of the grocer and the captors by whom the king was surrounded. Tears came into the eyes of many, they hesitated; the expression of their countenances showed that they would willingly, if they dared to consult the dictates of their own hearts, let the king pass on. A more affecting scene can hardly be imagined. It was midnight. Torches and flambeaux were gleaming around. Men, women, and children were hurrying to and fro in the darkness. The alarm bell was pealing out its hurried sounds through the still air. A crowd of half-dressed peasants and artisans was rapidly accumulating about the inn. The king stood pleading with his subjects for liberty and life, far more moved by compassion for his wife and children than for himself. The children, weary and terrified, and roused suddenly from the sleep in which they had been lost in their parents' arms, gazed upon the strange scene with undefined dread, unconscious of the magnitude of their peril. The queen, seated upon a bale of goods in the shop, with her two children clinging to her side, plead, at times with the tears of despair, and again with all the majesty of her queenly nature, for pity or for justice. She hoped that a woman's heart throbbed beneath the bosom of the wife of the mayor, and made an appeal to her which one would think

that, under the circumstances, no human heart could have resisted.

"You are a mother, madame," said the queen, in most imploring accents, "you are a wife! the fate of a wife and mother is in your hands. Think what I must suffer for these children — for my husband. At one word from you I shall owe them to you. The Queen of France will owe you more than her kingdom — more than life."

"Madame," coldly replied the selfish and calculating woman, "I should be happy to help you if I could without danger. You are thinking of your husband, I am thinking of mine. It is a wife's first duty to think of her own husband."

The queen saw that all appeals to such a spirit must be in vain, and, taking her two children by the hand, with Madame Elizabeth ascended the stairs which conducted from the grocer's shop to his rooms above, where she was shielded from the gaze of the crowd. She threw herself into a chair, and, overwhelmed with anguish, burst into a flood of tears. The alarm bell continued to ring; telegraphic dispatches were sent to Paris, communicating tidings of the arrest; the neighboring villagers flocked into town; the National Guard, composed of people opposed to the king were rapidly assembled from all quarters, and the streets barricaded to prevent the possibility of any rescue by the soldiers who ad-

vocated the royal cause. Thus the dreadful hours lingered away till the morning dawned. The increasing crowd stimulated one another to ferocity and barbarity. Insults, oaths, and imprecations incessantly fell upon the ears of the captives. The queen probably endured as much of mental agony that night as the human mind is capable of enduring. The conflict of indignation, terror, and despair was so dreadful, that her hair, which the night previous had been auburn, was in the morning white as snow. This extraordinary fact is well attested, and indicates an enormity of woe almost incomprehensible.

There was no knowledge in Paris of the king's departure until seven o'clock in the morning, when the servants of the palace entered the apartments of the king and queen, and found the beds undisturbed and the rooms deserted. The alarm spread like wildfire through the palace and through the city. The alarm bells were rung, cannon were fired, and the cry resounded through the streets, "The king has fled! the king has fled!" The terrified populace were expecting almost at the next moment to see him return with an avenging army to visit his rebellious subjects with the most terrible retribution. From all parts of the city, every lane, and street, and alley leading to the Tuileries was thronged with the crowd, pouring on, like an inundation, toward the deserted palace. The doors were forced open, and the interior

of the palace was instantly filled with the swarming multitudes. The mob from the streets polluted the sanctuaries of royalty with every species of vulgarity and obscenity. An amazon market-woman took possession of the queen's bed, and, spreading her cherries upon it, she took her seat upon the royal couch, exclaiming, "To-day it is the nation's turn to take their ease." One of the caps of the queen was placed in derision upon the head of a vile girl of the street. She exclaimed that it would sully her forehead, and trampled it under her feet with contempt. Every conceivable insult was heaped upon the royal family. Placards, posted upon the walls, offered trivial rewards to any one who would bring back the noxious animals which had fled from the palace. The metropolis was agitated to its very center, and the most vigorous measures immediately adopted to arrest the king, if possible, before he should reach the friends who could afford him protection. This turmoil continued for many hours, till the cry passed from mouth to mouth, and filled the streets, "He is arrested! he is arrested!"

CHAPTER VIII.

The Return to Paris.

Despair of the king.—Lovely character of Madame Elizabeth.—Return to Paris.—Insults of the mob.—Massacre of M. Dampierre.—Commissioners from Paris.—Noble character of Barnave.—Brutality of Pétion.—Approach to Paris.—Appalling violence.—Sufferings of the royal family.—Arrival at the Tuileries.—Exertions of La Fayette.—Roar of the multitude.—Spirit of the queen.—Embarrassing position of La Fayette.—The palace rigorously guarded.—The queen grossly insulted.—Despair of the king.—Supremacy of the mob.—A brutal assemblage.—Ferocious inscriptions.—Attack upon the palace.—The mob force an entrance.—Fearlessness of the king.—The mob awed.—Courage of Madame Elizabeth.—Cries of the mob.—The red bonnet.—First glimpse of Napoleon.—The queen's apartments invaded.—Insulted by abandoned women.—The queen's children.—The young girl.—Meeting of the National Assembly.—The king's friends derided.—The president of the Assembly.—The mob retires.—Deputies visit the royal family.—Unfeeling remark.—Hopeless condition of the royal family.—Breast-plate for the king.—Dagger-proof corset for the queen.—Fête in the Champ de Mars.—The last appearance of the royal family in public.

DURING all the long hours of the night, while the king was detained in the grocer's shop at Varennes, he was, with anxiety indescribable, looking every moment for soldiers to appear, sent by M. Bouillé for his rescue. But the National Guard, which was composed of those who were in favor of the Revolution, were soon assembled in such numbers as to render all idea of rescue hopeless. The sun rose upon Varennes but to show the

king the utter desperation of his condition, and he resigned himself to despair. The streets were filled with an infuriated populace, and from every direction the people were flocking toward the focus of excitement. The children of the royal family, utterly exhausted, had fallen asleep. Madame Elizabeth, one of the most lovely and gentle of earthly beings, the sister of the king, who, through all these trials, and, indeed, through her whole life, manifested peculiarly the spirit of heaven, was, regardless of herself, earnestly praying for support for her brother and sister.

Preparations were immediately made to forward the captives to Paris, lest the troops of M. Bouillé, informed of their arrest, should come to their rescue. The king did every thing in his power to delay the departure, and one of the women of the queen feigned sudden and alarming illness at the moment all of the rest had been pressed into the carriages. But the impatience of the populace could not thus be restrained. With shouts and threats they compelled all into the carriages, and the melancholy procession, escorted by three or four thousand of the National Guard, and followed by a numerous and ever-increasing concourse of the people moved slowly toward Paris. Hour after hour dragged heavily along as the fugitives, drinking the very dregs of humiliation, were borne by their triumphant and exasperated foes back to the horrors from which they had fled. The road was lined on

either side by countless thousands, insulting the agonized victims with derision, menaces, and the most furious gestures. Varennes is distant from Paris one hundred and eighty miles, and for this whole distance, by night and by day, with hardly an hour's delay for food or repose, the royal family were exposed to the keenest torture of which the spiritual nature is in this world susceptible. Every revolution of the wheels but brought them into contact with fresh vociferations of calumny. The fury of the populace was so great that it was with difficulty that the guard could protect their captives from the most merciless massacre. Again and again there was a rush made at the carriages, and the mob was beaten back by the arms of the soldiers. One old gentleman, M. Dampierre, ever accustomed to venerate royalty, stood by the road side, affected by the profoundest grief in view of the melancholy spectacle. Uncovering his gray hairs, he bowed respectfully to his royal master, and ventured to give utterance to accents of sympathy. The infuriated populace fell upon him like tigers, and tore him to pieces before the eyes of the king and queen. The wheels of the royal carriage came very near running over his bleeding corpse.

The procession was at length met by commissioners sent from the Assembly to take charge of the king. Ashamed of the brutality of the people, Bar-

nave and Pétion, the two commissioners, entered the royal carriage to share the danger of its inmates. They shielded the prisoners from death, but they could not shield them from insult and outrage. An ecclesiastic, venerable in person and in character, approached the carriages as they moved sadly along, and exhibited upon his features some traces of respect and sorrow for fallen royalty. It was a mortal offense. The brutal multitude would not endure a *look* even of sympathy for the descendant of a hundred kings. They rushed upon the defenseless clergyman, and would have killed him instantly had not Barnave most energetically interfered. "Frenchmen!" he shouted, from the carriage windows, "will you, a nation of brave men, become a people of murderers!" Barnave was a young man of much nobleness of character. His polished manners, and his sympathy for the wrecked and ruined family of the king, quite won their gratitude. Pétion, on the contrary, was coarse and brutal. He was a *Democrat* in the worst sense of that abused word. He affected rude and rough familiarity with the royal family, lounged contemptuously upon the cushions, ate apples and melons, and threw the rind out of the window, careless whether or not he hit the king in the face. In all his remarks, he seemed to take a ferocious pleasure in wounding the feelings of his victims.

As the cavalcade drew near to Paris, the crowds

surrounding the carriages became still more dense, and the fury of the populace more unmeasured. The leaders of the National Assembly were very desirous of protecting the royal family from the rage of the mob, and to shield the nation from the disgrace of murdering the king, the queen, and their children in the streets. It was feared that, when the prisoners should enter the thronged city, where the mob had so long held undisputed sway, it would be impossible to restrain the passions of the multitude, and that the pavements would be defaced with the blood of the victims. Placards were pasted upon the walls in every part of the city, "Whoever applauds the king shall be beaten; whoever insults him shall be hung." As the carriages approached the suburbs of the metropolis, the multitudes which thronged them became still more numerous and tumultuous, and the exhibitions of violence more appalling. All the dens of infamy in the city vomited their denizens to meet and deride, and, if possible, to destroy the captured monarch. It was a day of intense and suffocating heat. Ten persons were crowded into the royal carriage. Not a breath of air fanned the fevered cheeks of the sufferers. The heat, reflected from the pavements and the bayonets, was almost insupportable. Clouds of dust enveloped them, and the sufferings of the children were so great that the queen was actually apprehensive that they would die. The queen dropped the window of the

carriage, and, in a voice of agony, implored some one to give her a cup of water for her fainting child. "See, gentlemen," she exclaimed, "in what a condition my poor children are! one of them is choking." "We will yet choke them and you," was the brutal reply, "in another fashion." Several times the mob broke through the line which guarded the carriages, pushed aside the horses, and, mounting the steps, stretched their clenched fists in at the windows. The procession moved perseveringly along in the midst of the clashing of sabers, the clamor of the blood-thirsty multitude, and the cries of men trampled under the hoofs of the horses.

It was the 25th of June, 1791, at seven o'clock in the evening, when this dreadful procession, passing through the Barrier de l'Etoile, entered the city, and traversed the streets, through double files of soldiers, to the Tuileries. At length they arrived, half dead with exhaustion and despair, at the palace. The crowd was so immense that it was with the utmost difficulty that an entrance could be effected. At that moment La Fayette, who had been adopting the most vigorous measures for the protection of the persons of the royal family, came to meet them. The moment Maria Antoinette saw him, forgetful of her own danger, and trembling for the body-guard who had periled their lives for her family, she exclaimed, "Monsieur La Fayette, save the body-guard." The

king and queen alighted from the carriage. Some of the soldiers took the children, and carried them through the crowd into the palace. A member of the Assembly, who had been inimical to the king, came forward, and offered his arm to the queen for her protection. She looked him a moment in the face, and indignantly rejected the proffered aid of an enemy. Then, seeing a deputy who had been their friend, she eagerly accepted his arm, and ascended the steps of the palace. A prolonged roar, as of thunder, ascended from the multitudinous throng which surrounded the palace when the king and queen had entered, and the doors of their prison were again closed against them.

La Fayette was at the head of the National Guard. He was a strong advocate for the rights of the people. At the same time, he wished to respect the rights of the king, and to sustain a constitutional monarchy. As soon as they had entered the palace, Maria Antoinette, with that indomitable spirit which ever characterized her, approached La Fayette, and offered to him the keys of her casket, as if he were her jailer. La Fayette, deeply wounded, refused to receive them. The queen indignantly, with her own hands, placed them in his hat. "Your majesty will have the goodness to take them back," said the marquis, "for I certainly shall not touch them."

The position of La Fayette at this time was about

as embarrassing as it could possibly have been; and he was virtually the jailer of the royal family, answerable with his life for their safe keeping. He had always been a firm friend of civil and religious liberty. He was very anxious to see France blessed with those free institutions and that recognition of popular rights which are the glory of America, but he also wished to protect the king and queen from outrage and insult; and a storm of popular fury had now risen which he knew not how to control or to guide. He, however, resolved to do all in his power to protect the royal family, and to watch the progress of events with the hope of establishing constitutional liberty and a constitutional throne over France.

The palace was now guarded, by command of the Assembly, with a degree of rigor unknown before. The iron gates of the courts and garden of the Tuileries were kept locked. A list of the persons who were to be permitted to see the royal family was made out, and none others were allowed to enter. At every door sentinels were placed, and in every passage, and in the corridor which connected the chambers of the king and queen, armed men were stationed. The doors of the sleeping apartments of the king and queen were kept open night and day, and a guard was placed there to keep his eye ever upon the victims. No respect was paid to female modesty, and the queen was compelled to retire to

her bed under the watchful eye of an unfeeling soldier. It seems impossible that a civilized people could have been guilty of such barbarism. But all sentiments of humanity appear to have fled from France. One of the queen's women, at night, would draw her own bed between that of the queen and the open door, that she might thus partially shield the person of her royal mistress. The king was so utterly overwhelmed by the magnitude of the calamities in which he was now involved, that his mind, for a season, seemed to be prostrated and paralyzed by the blow. For ten days he did not exchange a single word with any member of his family, but moved sadly about in the apathy of despair, or sat in moody silence. At last the queen threw herself upon her knees before him, and, presenting to him her children, besought him, for her sake and that of their little ones, to rouse his fortitude. "We may all perish," she said, "but let us, at least, perish like sovereigns, and not wait to be strangled unresistingly upon the very floor of our apartments."

The long and dreary months of the autumn, the winter, and the spring thus passed away, with occasional gleams of hope visiting their minds, but with the storm of revolution, on the whole, growing continually more black and terrific. General anarchy rioted throughout France. Murders were daily committed with impunity. There was no law. The

mob had all power in their hands. Neither the king nor queen could make their appearance any where without exposure to insult. Violent harangues in the Assembly and in the streets had at length roused the populace to a new act of outrage. The immediate cause was the refusal of the king to give his sanction to a bill for the persecution of the priests. It was the 20th of June, 1792. A tumultuous assemblage of all the miserable, degraded, and vicious, who thronged the garrets and cellars of Paris, and who had been gathered from all lands by the lawlessness with which crime could riot in the capital, were seen converging, as by a common instinct, toward the palace. They bore banners fearfully expressive of their ferocity, and filled the air with the most savage outcries. Upon the end of a pike there was affixed a bleeding heart, with the inscription, "The heart of the aristocracy." Another bore a doll, suspended to a frame by the neck, with this inscription, "To the gibbet with the Austrian." With the ferocity of wolves, they surrounded the palace in a mass impenetrable. The king and queen, as they looked from their windows upon the multitudinous gathering, swaying to and fro like the billows of the ocean in a storm, and with the clamor of human passions, more awful than the voice of many waters, rending the skies, instinctively clung to one another and to their children in their powerlessness. Madame Eliza-

beth, with her saint-like spirit and her heaven-directed thoughts, was ever unmindful of her own personal danger in her devotion to her beloved brother.

The king hoped that the soldiers who were stationed as a guard within the inclosures of the palace would be able to protect them from violence. The gates leading to the Place du Carrousel were soon shattered beneath the blows of axes, and the human torrent poured in with the resistlessness of a flood. The soldiers very deliberately shook the priming from their guns, as the emphatic expression to the mob that they had nothing to fear from them, and the artillerymen coolly directed their pieces *against* the palace. Axes and iron bars were immediately leveled at the doors, and they flew from their hinges; and the drunken and infuriated rabble, with clubs, and pistols, and daggers, poured, an interminable throng, through the halls and apartments where kings, for ages, had reigned in inapproachable pomp and power. The servants of the king, in terror, fled in every direction. Still the crowd came rushing and roaring on, crashing the doors before them, till they approached the apartment in which the royal family was secluded. The king, who, though deficient in active energy, possessed passive fearlessness in the most eminent degree, left his wife, children, and sister clinging together, and entered the adjoining room to meet his assailants. Just as he entered the room, the door,

which was bolted, fell with a crash, and the mob was before him. For a moment the wretches were held at bay by the calm dignity of the monarch, as, without the tremor of a nerve, he gazed steadily upon them. The crowd in the rear pressed on upon those in the advance, and three friends of the king had just time to interpose themselves between him and the mob, when the whole dense throng rushed in and filled the room. A drunken assassin, with a sharp iron affixed to a long pole, aimed a thrust violently at the king's heart. One blow from an heroic citizen laid him prostrate on the floor, and he was trampled under the feet of the throng. Oaths and imprecations filled the room; knives and sabers gleamed, and yet the majesty of royalty, for a few brief moments, repelled the ferocity of the assassins. A few officers of the National Guard, roused by the peril of the king, succeeded in reaching him, and, crowding him into the embrasure of a window placed themselves as a shield before him. The king seemed only anxious to withdraw the attention of the mob from the room in which his family were clustered, where he saw his sister, Madame Elizabeth, with extended arms and imploring looks, struggling to come and share his fate. "It is the queen!" was the cry, and a score of weapons were turned toward her. "No! no!" exclaimed others, "it is Madame Elizabeth." Her gentle spirit, even in these degraded hearts, had won

admiration, and not a blow fell upon her. "Ah!" exclaimed Madame Elizabeth, "why do you undeceive them? Gladly would I die in her place, if I might thus save the queen." By the surging of the crowd she was swept into the embrasure of another window, where she was hemmed in without any possibility of extrication. By this time the crowds were like locusts, climbing up the balconies, and pouring in at the windows, and every foot of ground around the palace was filled with the excited throng. Shouts of derision filled the air, while the mob without were incessantly crying, "Have you killed them yet? Throw us out their heads."

Almost miraculously, the friends surrounding the king succeeded in warding off the blows which were aimed at him. One of the mob thrust out to the king, upon the end of a pike, a *red bonnet*, the badge of the Jacobins, and there was a general shout, "Let him put it on! let him put it on! It is a sign of patriotism. If he is a patriot he will wear it." The king smiling, took the bonnet and put it upon his head. Instantly there rose a shout from the fickle multitude, "*Vive le roi!*" The mob had achieved its victory, and placed the badge of its power upon the brow of the humbled monarch.

There was at that time standing in the court-yard of the palace a young man, with the blood boiling with indignation in his veins, in view of the atroci-

ties of the mob. The ignominious spectacle of the red bonnet upon the head of the king, as he stood in the recess of the window, seemed more than this young man could endure, and, turning upon his heel, he hastened away, exclaiming, "The wretches! the wretches! they ought to be mown down by grape-shot." This is the first glimpse the Revolution presents of Napoleon Bonaparte.

But while the king was enduring their tortures in one apartment, the queen was suffering indignities and outrages equally atrocious in another. Maria Antoinette was, in the eyes of the populace, the personification of every thing to be hated. They believed her to be *infamous* as a wife; proud, tyrannical, and treacherous; that, as an Austrian, she hated France; that she was doing all in her power to induce foreign armies to invade the French empire with fire and sword; and that she had instigated the king to attempt escape, that he might head the armies. Maria, conscious of this hatred, was aware that her presence would only augment the tide of indignation swelling against the king, and she therefore remained in the bed-chamber with her children. But her sanctuary was instantly invaded. The door of her apartment had been, by some friend, closed and bolted. Its stout oaken panels were soon dashed in, and the door driven from its hinges. A crowd of miserable women, abandoned to the lowest depths of degrada-

tion and vulgarity, rushed into the apartment, assailing her ears with the most obscene and loathsome epithets the language could afford. The queen stood in the recess of a window, with queenly pride curbing her mortal apprehension. A few friends had gathered around her, and placed a table before her as a partial protection. Her daughter, an exceedingly beautiful girl of fourteen years of age, with her light brown hair floating in ringlets over her fair brow and shoulders, clung to her mother's bosom as if she thought not of herself, but would only, with her own body, shield her mother's heart from the dagger of the assassin. Her son, but seven years old, clung to his mother's hand, gazing with a bewildered look of terror upon the hideous spectacle. The vociferations of the mob were almost deafening. But the aspect of the group, so lovely and so helpless, seemed to disarm the hand of violence. Now and then, in the endless crowd defiling through the room, those in the advance pressed resistlessly on by those in the rear, some one more tender hearted would speak a word of sympathy. A young girl came crowded along, neatly dressed, and with a pleasing countenance. She, however, immediately began to revile the queen in the coarsest language of vituperation.

"Why do you hate me so, my friend?" said the queen, kindly; "have I ever done any thing to injure or to offend you?"

"No! you have never injured me," was the reply, "but it is you who cause the misery of the nation."

"Poor child!" rejoined the queen, "you have been told so, and have been deceived. Why should I make the people miserable? I am the wife of the king—the mother of the dauphin; and by all the feelings of my heart, as a wife and mother, I am a Frenchwoman. I shall never see my own country again. I can only be happy or unhappy in France. I was happy when you loved me."

The heart of the girl was touched. She burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Pardon me, good queen, I did not know you; but now I see that I have indeed been deceived, and you are truly good."

Hour after hour of humiliation and agony thus rolled away. The National Assembly met, and in vain the friends of the king urged its action to rescue the royal family from the insults and perils to which they were exposed. But these efforts were met by the majority only with derision. They hoped that the terrors of the mob would compel the king hereafter to give his assent to any law whatever which they might frame. At last the shades of night began to add their gloom to this awful scene, and even the most bitter enemies of the king did not think it safe to leave forty thousand men, inflamed with intoxication and rage, to riot, through the hours of the

night, in the parlors, halls, and chambers of the Tuileries. The president of the Assembly, at that late hour, crowded his way into the apartment where, for several hours, the king had been exposed to every conceivable indignity. The mysterious authority of law opened the way through the throng.

"I have only just learned," said the president, "the situation of your majesty."

"That is very astonishing," replied the king, indignantly, "for it is a long time that it has lasted."

The president, mounted upon the shoulders of four grenadiers, addressed the mob and urged them to retire, and they, weary with the long hours of outrages, slowly sauntered through the halls and apartments of the palace, and at eight o'clock silence reigned, with the gloom of night, throughout the Tuileries. The moment the mob became perceptibly less, the king received his sister into his arms, and they hastened to the apartment of the queen. During all the horrors of this awful day, her heroic soul had never quailed; but, now that the peril was over, she threw herself upon the bosom of her husband, and wept in all the bitterness of inconsolable grief. As the family were locked in each other's arms in silent gratitude for their preservation, the king accidentally beheld in a mirror the red bonnet, which he had forgotten to remove from his head. He turned red with mortification, and, casting upon the floor the badge of his

degradation, turned to the queen, with his eyes filled with tears, and exclaimed, "Ah, madame, why did I take you from your country, to associate you with the ignominy of such a day as this!"

After the withdrawal of the mob, several of the deputies of the National Assembly were in the apartment with the royal family, and as the queen recounted the horrors of the last five hours, one of them, though bitterly hostile to the royal family, could not refrain from tears. "You weep," said she to him, "at seeing the king and his family so cruelly treated by a people whom he always wished to make happy."

"True, madame," unfeelingly replied the deputy, "I weep for the misfortunes of a beautiful and sensitive woman, the mother of a family. But do not mistake; not one of my tears falls for either king or queen. I hate kings and queens. It is the only feeling they inspire me with. It is my religion."

But time stops not. The hours of a dark and gloomy night, succeeding this terrible day, lingered slowly along, but no sleep visited the eyelids of the inmates of the Tuileries. Scowling guards still eyed them malignantly, and the royal family could not unbosom to one another their sorrows but in the presence of those who were hostile spies upon every word and action. Escape was now apparently hopeless. The events of the past day had taught them

that they had no protection against popular fury. And they were filled with the most gloomy forebodings of woes yet to come.

These scenes occurred on the 20th of June, 1792. On the 14th of July of the same year there was to be a magnificent fête in the Champ de Mars, as the anniversary of the independence of the nation. The king and queen were compelled to be present to grace the triumph of the people, and to give the royal oath. It was anticipated that there would be many attempts on that day to assassinate the king and queen. Some of the friends of the royal family urged that they should each wear a breast-plate which would guard against the first stroke of a dagger, and thus give the king's friends time to defend him. A breast-plate was secretly made for the king. It consisted of fifteen folds of Italian taffeta, and was formed into an under waist coat and a wide belt. Its impenetrability was tried, and it resisted all thrusts of the dagger and several balls were turned aside by it. Madame Campan wore it for three days as an under petticoat before an opportunity could be found for the king to try it on unperceived. At length, one morning, in the queen's chamber, a moment's opportunity occurred, and he slipped it on, saying, at the same time, to Madame Campan, "It is to satisfy the queen that I submit to this inconvenience. They will

not assassinate me. Their scheme is changed. They will put me to death in another way."

A dagger-proof corset had also been prepared for the queen without her knowledge. She, however, could not be persuaded to wear it. "If they assassinate *me*," she said, "it will be a most happy event. It will release me from the most sorrowful existence, and may save from a cruel death the rest of the family." The 14th of July arrived. The king, queen, and dauphin were marched, like captives gracing an Oriental triumph, at the head of the procession, from the palace to the Champ de Mars. With pensive features and saddened hearts they passed along through the single file of soldiers, who were barely able to keep at bay the raging mob, furious for their blood, and maledictions fell heavily upon their ears from a thousand tongues. The fountain of tears was dry, and despair had nerved them with stoicism. They returned to the palace in the deepest dejection, and never again appeared in the streets of Paris till they were borne to their execution.

CHAPTER IX.

Imprisonment in the Temple.

Apprehension of poison.— The queen daily insulted.— An assassin in the queen's chamber.— The allied army.— Parties in France.— The Royalists, Girondists, and Jacobins.— Consternation in Paris.— The king's dethronement.— Scene from the palace.— Gathering of the mob.— The queen with her children.— Brutal remarks of the troops.— Rising of the sun.— Disaffection of the troops.— Extremity of the royal family.— Spirit of the queen.— The king's calmness.— The mother and the queen.— The royal family take refuge in the Assembly.— The king's speech.— The square box.— The king's serenity.— The mob at the palace.— Brutal massacre of the king's friends.— The mob sack the palace.— The dead bodies of the Royalists burned.— The king dethroned.— The royal family removed to the Feuillants.— Bitter sufferings of the royal family.— Taken back to the Assembly.— The royal family consigned to the Temple.— Advance of the allies.— Inhuman massacre.— Description of the Temple.— Tower of the Temple.— Apartments of the royal family.— Obscene pictures.— Resources of the prison.— Employments of the royal family.— Severe restrictions.— Manner of obtaining news.— The Princess Lamballe.— Maria's letter to the Princess de Lamballe.— She rejoins the queen.— The princess separated from the queen.— She is thrown into prison.— Trial of the princess.— She refuses to swear.— Assassination of the princess.— Brutality of the mob.— Dreadful apprehensions.— Increased severities.— The queen grossly insulted.— The king separated from his family.— Wretched state of the king.— The queen's anguish at the separation.— The king sees his family occasionally.— Condition of the captives.

EVERY day now added to the insults and anguish the royal family were called to endure. They were under such apprehension of having their food poisoned, that all the articles placed upon the table by the attendants, provided by the Assembly, were removed untouched, and they ate and drank

nothing but what was secretly provided by one of the ladies of the bed-chamber. One day the queen stood at her window, looking out sadly into the garden of the Tuileries, when a soldier, standing under the window, with his bayonet upon his gun, looked up to her and said, "I wish, Austrian woman, that I had your head upon my bayonet here, that I might pitch it over the wall to the dogs in the street." And this man was placed under her window ostensibly for her protection! Whenever the queen made her appearance in the garden, she encountered insults often too outrageous to be related. An assassin, one night, with his sharpened dagger, endeavored to penetrate her chamber. She was awoke by the noise of the struggle with the guard at the door. The assassin was arrested. "What a life!" exclaimed the queen. "Insults by day, and assassins by night! But let him go. He came to murder me. Had he succeeded, the Jacobins would have borne him tomorrow in triumph through the streets of Paris.

The allied army, united with the emigrants, in a combined force of nearly one hundred and fifty thousand men, now entered the frontiers of France, to rescue, by military power, the royal family. They issued a proclamation, in which it was stated that "the allied sovereigns had taken up arms to stop the anarchy which prevailed in France — to give liberty to the king, and restore him to the legitimate author-

ity of which he had been deprived." The proclamation assured the people of Paris that, if they did not immediately liberate the king and return to their allegiance, the city of Paris should be totally destroyed, and that the enemies of the king should forfeit their heads. This proclamation, with the invasion of the French territory by the allied army, fanned to the intensest fury the flames of passion already raging in all parts of the empire. Thousands of young men from all the provinces thronged into the city, breathing vengeance against the royal family. In vain did the king declare his disapproval of these violent measures on the part of the allies. In vain did he assert his readiness to head the armies of France to repel invasion.

There were now three important parties in France struggling for power. The first was that of the king, and the nobles generally, wishing for the re-establishment of the monarchy. The second was that of the Girondists, wishing for the dethronement of the king and the establishment of a republic, with the power in the hands of the most influential citizens in intelligence and wealth. The third was that of the ultra Democrats or Jacobins, who wished to raise the multitude from degradation, penury, and infamy, into power, by the destruction of the throne, and the subjection of the middling classes, and the entire subversion of all the distinctions of wealth and rank.

The approach of the allies united both of these latter classes against the throne. A motion was immediately introduced into the Assembly that the monarchy be entirely abolished, and a mob rioting through Paris threatened the deputies with death unless they dethroned the king. But an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men were marching upon Paris, and the deputies feared a terrible retribution if this new insult were heaped upon their sovereign. No person can describe the confusion and consternation with which the metropolis of France was filled. The mob declared, on the 9th of August, that, unless the dethronement were that day pronounced, they would that night sack the palace, and bear the heads of the royal family through the streets upon their pikes. The Assembly, undecided, and trembling between the two opposing perils, separated without the adoption of any resolve. All knew that a night of dreadful tumult and violence must ensue. Some hundreds of gentlemen collected around the king and queen, resolved to perish with them. Several regiments of soldiers were placed in and around the palace to drive back the mob, but it was well known that the troops would more willingly fraternize with the multitude than oppose them. The sun went down, and the street lamps feebly glimmered through the darkness of the night. The palace was filled with armed men. The gentlemen surrounding the

king were all conscious of their utter inability to protect him. They had come but to share the fate of their sovereign. The queen and the Princess Elizabeth ascended to an upper part of the palace, and stepped from a low window into the dark shadow of a balcony to look out upon the tumultuous city. The sound, as of the gathering of a resistless storm, swept through all the streets, and rose loud and threatening above the usual roar of the vast metropolis. The solemn tones of the alarm bells, pealing through the night air, summoned all the desperadoes of France to their several places of rendezvous, to march upon the palace. The rumbling of artillery wheels, and the frequent discharge of musketry, proclaimed the determination and the desperation of the intoxicated mob. In darkness and silence, the queen and her sister stood listening to these fearful sounds, and their hearts throbbed violently in view of the terrible scene through which they knew that they must pass. The queen, pale but tearless, and nerved to the utmost by queenly pride, descended to the rooms below. She walked into the chamber where her beautiful son was sleeping, gazed earnestly upon him for a moment, bent over him, and imprinted upon his cheek a mother's kiss — and yet without a tear. She entered the apartment of her daughter — lovely, surpassingly lovely in all the blooming beauty of fifteen. The princess, comprehending the peril of

the hour, could not sleep. Maria pressed her child to her throbbing heart, and the pride of the queen was soon vanquished by the tenderness of the mother, as with convulsive energy she embraced her, and wept in anguish almost unendurable. Shouts of unfeeling derision arose from the troops below, stationed for the protection of the royal family, and their ears were assailed by remarks of the most brutal barbarity. Hour after hour of the night lingered along, the clamor without incessantly increasing, and the crowds surrounding the palace augmenting. The excitement within the palace was so awful that no words could give it utterance. The few hundred gentlemen who had come so heroically to share the fate of their sovereign were aware that no resistance could be made to the tens of thousands who were thirsting for their blood.

Midnight came. It was fraught with horror. The queen, in utter exhaustion, threw herself upon a sofa. At that moment a musket shot was fired in the court-yard. "There is the first shot," said the queen, with the calmness of despair, "but it will not be the last. Let us go and be with the king." At length, from the windows of their apartment, a few gleams of light began to redden the eastern sky. "Come," said the Princess Elizabeth, "and see the rising sun." Maria went mournfully to the window, gazed long and steadfastly upon the rising luminary, feeling that,

before that day's sun should go down, she and all whom she loved would be in another world. It was an awful spectacle which the light of day revealed. All the avenues to the palace were choked with intoxicated thousands. The gardens, and the court-yard surrounding the palace, were filled with troops, placed there for the protection of the sovereign, but evidently sympathizing with the mob, with whom they exchanged badges and friendly greetings. The queen, apprehensive that the children might be massacred in their beds, had them dressed, and placed by the side of herself and the king. It was recommended to the king that he should go down into the court-yard, among the troops stationed there for his defense; that his presence might possibly awaken sympathy and enthusiasm in his behalf. The king and queen, with their son and daughter, and Madame Elizabeth, went down with throbbing hearts to visit the ranks of their defenders. They were received with derisive insults and hootings. Some of the gunners left their posts, and thrust their fists into the face of the king, insulting him with menaces the most brutal. They instantly returned to the palace, pallid with indignation and despair.

Soon an officer came in and informed the king that all resistance was hopeless; that six pieces of artillery were already pointed against the main door of the palace; that a mob of countless thousands, well

armed, and dragging with them twelve heavy cannon, were rapidly approaching the scene of conflict; that the whole populace of Paris were up in arms against the king, and that no reliance whatever could be placed in the soldiers stationed for his defense. "There is not," said he, "a single moment to lose. You will all inevitably and immediately perish, unless you hasten to the hall where the Assembly is in session, and place yourself under the protection of that body." The pride of the queen was intensely aroused in view of appealing to the Assembly, their bitterest enemy, for succor, and she indignantly replied, "I would rather be nailed to the walls of the palace than leave it to take refuge in the Assembly." And the heroism of Maria Theresa instinctively inspiring her bosom, she seized, from the belt of an officer, two pistols, and, presenting them to the king, exclaimed, "Now, sire, is the time to show yourself, and if we must perish, let us perish with glory." The king calmly received the pistols, and silently handed them back to the officer.

"Madame," said the messenger, "are you prepared to take upon yourself the responsibility of the death of the king, of yourself, of your children, and of all who are here to defend you? All Paris is on the march. Time presses. In a few moments it will be too late." The queen cast a glance upon her daughter, and a mother's fears prevailed. The crim-

son blood mounted to her temples. Then, again, she was pale as a corpse. Then, rising from her seat, she said, "Let us go." It was seven o'clock in the morning.

The king and queen, with their two children, Madame Elizabeth, and a few personal friends, descended the great stair-case of the Tuileries, to pass out through the bands of soldiers and the tumultuous mob to the hall of the Assembly. At the stair-case there was a large concourse of men and women, gesticulating with fury, who refused to permit the royal family to depart. The tumult was such that the members of the royal family were separated from each other, and thus they stood for a moment mingled with the crowd, listening to language of menace and insult, when a deputy assured the mob that an order of the Assembly had summoned the royal family to them. The rioters then gave way, and the mournful group passed out of the door into the garden. They forced their way along, surrounded by a few friends, through imprecations, insults, gleaming daggers, and dangers innumerable, until they arrived at the hall of the Assembly, which the king was with difficulty enabled to enter, in consequence of the immense concourse which crowded him, thirsting for his blood, and yet held back by an unseen hand. As the king entered the hall, he said, with dignity, to the president, "I have come here to save the na-

tion from the commission of a great crime. I shall always consider myself, with my family, safe in your hands." The royal family sat down upon a bench. Mournful silence pervaded the hall. A more sorrowful, heart-rending sight mortal eyes have seldom seen. The father, the mother, the saint-like sister, the innocent and helpless children, had found but a momentary refuge from cannibals, who were roaring like wolves around the hall, and battering at the doors to break in and slake their vengeance with blood. It was seriously apprehended that the mob would make a rush, and sprinkle the blood of the royal family upon the very floor of the sanctuary where they had sought a refuge.

Behind the seat of the president there was a box about ten feet square, constituting a seat reserved for reporters, guarded by an iron railing. Into this box the royal family were crowded for safety. A few friends of the king gathered around the box. The heat of the day was almost insupportable. Not a breath of air could penetrate the closely-packed apartment; and the heat, as of a furnace, glowed in the room. Scarcely had the royal family got into this frail retreat, when the noise without informed them that their friends were falling before the daggers of assassins, and the greatest alarm was felt lest the doors should be driven in by the merciless mob. In this awful hour, the king appeared as calm, serene, and uncon-

cerned as if he were the spectator of a scene in which he had no interest. The countenance of the queen exhibited all the unvanquished firmness of her soul, as with flushed cheek and indignant eye she looked upon the drama of terror and confusion which was passing. The young princess wept, and her cheeks were marked with the furrows which her tears, dried by the heat, had left. The young dauphin appeared as cool and self-possessed as his father. The rattling fire of artillery, and the report of musketry at the palace, proclaimed to the royal family and the affrighted deputies the horrid conflict, or, rather, massacre which was raging there. Immediately after the king and queen had left the Tuileries, the mob broke in at every avenue. A few hundred Swiss soldiers left there remained faithful to the king. The conflict was short — the massacre awful. The infuriated multitude rushed through the halls and the apartments of the spacious palace, murdering, without mercy and without distinction of age or sex, all the friends of the king whom they encountered. The mutilated bodies were thrown out of the windows to the mob which filled the garden and the court. The wretched inmates of the palace fled, pursued in every direction. But concealment and escape were alike hopeless. Some poor creatures leaped from the windows and clambered up the marble monuments. The wretches refrained from firing at them, lest they should injure

the statuary, but pricked them with their bayonets till they compelled them to drop down, and then murdered them at their feet. A pack of wolves could not have been more merciless. The populace, now rioting in their resistless power, with no law and no authority to restrain them, gave loose rein to vengeance, and, having glutted themselves with blood, proceeded to sack the palace. Its magnificent furniture, and splendid mirrors, and costly paintings were dashed to pieces and thrown from the windows, when the fragments were eagerly caught by those below and piled up for bonfires. Drunken wretches staggered through all the most private apartments, threw themselves, with blood-soaked boots, upon the bed of the queen, ransacked her drawers, made themselves merry over her notes, and letters, and the various articles of her toilet, and polluted the very air of the palace by their vulgar and obscene ribaldry. As night approached, huge fires were built, upon which the dead bodies of the massacred Royalists were thrown, and all were consumed.

During all the long hours of that dreadful day, and until two o'clock the ensuing night, the royal family remained, almost without a change of posture, in the narrow seat which had served them for an asylum. Who can measure the amount of their endurance during these fifteen hours of woe? An act was passed, during this time, in obedience to the

demands of the mob, dethroning the king. The hour of midnight had now come and gone, and still the royal sufferers were in their comfortless imprisonment, half dead with excitement and exhaustion. The young dauphin had fallen asleep in his mother's arms. Madame Elizabeth and the princess, entirely unnerved, were sobbing with uncontrollable grief. The royal family were then transferred, for the remainder of the night, to some deserted and unfurnished rooms in the old monastery of the Feuillants. Some beds and mattresses were hastily collected, and a few coarse chairs for their accommodation. As soon as they had entered these cheerless rooms, and were alone, the king prostrated himself upon his knees, with his family clinging around him, and gave utterance to the prayer, "Thy trials, O God! are dreadful. Give us courage to bear them. We adore the hand which chastens, as that which has so often blessed us. Have mercy on those who have died fighting in our defense."

Utter exhaustion enabled the unhappy family to find a few hours of agitated sleep. The sun arose the ensuing morning with burning rays, and, as they fell upon the eyelids of the queen, she looked wildly around her for a moment upon the cheerless scene, and then, with a shudder, exclaiming, "Oh! I hoped it was all a dream," buried her face again in her pillow. The attendants around her burst into tears.

"You see, my unhappy friends," said Maria, "a woman even more unhappy than yourselves, for she has caused all your misfortunes." The queen wept bitterly as she was informed of the massacre of her friends the preceding day. Already the royal family felt the pressure of poverty. They were penniless, and had to borrow some garments for the children. The king and queen could make no change in their disordered dress.

At ten o'clock in the morning, a guard came and conducted the royal family again to the Assembly. Immediately the hall was surrounded by a riotous mob, clamoring for their blood. At one moment the outer doors were burst open, and the blood-thirsty wretches made a rush for the interior. The king, believing that their final hour had come, begged his friends to seek their own safety, and abandon him and his family to their fate. The day of agitation and terror, however, passed away, and, as the gloom of night again darkened the city, the illustrious sufferers were reconveyed to the Feuillants. All their friends were driven from them, and guards were placed over them, who, by rudeness and insults, did what they could to add bitterness to their captivity.

It was decided by the Assembly that they should all be removed to the prison of the Temple. At three o'clock the next day two carriages were brought to the door, and the royal family were conveyed through

the thronged streets and by the most popular thoroughfares to the prison. The enemies of royalty appeared to court the ostentatious display of its degradation. As the carriages were slowly dragged along, an immense concourse of spectators lined the way, and insults and derision were heaped upon them at every step. At last, after two hours, in which they were constrained to drain the cup of ignominy to its dregs, the carriages rolled under the gloomy arches of the Temple, and their prison doors were closed against them.

In the mean time the allied army was advancing with rapid strides toward the city. The most dreadful consternation reigned in the metropolis. The populace rose in its rage to massacre all suspected of being in favor of royalty. The prisons were crowded with the victims of suspicion. The rage of the mob would not wait for trial. The prison doors were burst open, and a general and awful massacre ensued. There was no mercy shown to the innocence of youth or to female helplessness. The streets of Paris were red with the blood of its purest citizens, and the spirit of murder, with unrestrained license, glutted its vengeance. In one awful day and night many thousands perished. The walls of rock and iron of the Temple alone protected the royal family from a similar fate.

The Temple was a dismal fortress which stood in

the heart of Paris, a gloomy memorial of past ages of violence and crime. It was situated not far from the Bastille, and inclosed within its dilapidated yet massive walls a vast space of silence and desolation. In former ages cowled monks had moved with noiseless tread through its spacious corridors, and their matins and vespers had vibrated along the stone arches of this melancholy pile. But now weeds choked its court-yard, and no sounds were heard in its deserted apartments but the shrieking of the wind as it rushed through the grated windows and whistled around the angles of the towers. The shades of night were adding to the gloom of this wretched abode as the captives were led into its deserted and unfurnished cells. It was after midnight before the rooms for their imprisonment were assigned to them. It was a night of Egyptian darkness. Soldiers with drawn swords guarded them, as, by the light of a lantern, they picked their way through the rank weeds of the castle garden, and over piles of rubbish, to a stone tower, some thirty feet square and sixty feet high, to whose damp, cheerless, and dismal apartments they were consigned. "Where are you conducting us?" inquired a faithful servant who had followed the fortunes of his royal master. The officer replied, "Thy master has been used to gilded roofs, but now he will see how the assassins of the people are lodged."

Madame Elizabeth was placed in a kind of kitchen,

or wash-room, with a truckle bed in it, on the ground floor. The second floor of the Tower was assigned to the attendants of the household. One common wooden bedstead and a few old chairs were the only furniture of the room. The third floor was assigned to the king, and queen, and the two children. A footman had formerly slept in the room, and had left suspended upon the walls some coarse and vulgar prints. The king, immediately glancing at them, took them down and turned their faces to the wall, exclaiming, "I would not have my daughter see such things." The king and the children soon fell soundly asleep; but no repose came to the agitated mind of Maria Antoinette. Her lofty and unbending spirit felt these indignities and atrocities too keenly. She spent the night in silent tears, and indulging in the most gloomy forebodings of the fate which yet awaited them.

The morning sun arose, but to show still more clearly the dismal aspect of the prison. But few rays could penetrate the narrow windows of the tower, and blinds of oaken plank were so constructed that the inmates could only look out upon the sky. A very humble breakfast was provided for them, and then they began to look about to see what resources their prison afforded to beguile the weary hours. A few books were found, such as an odd volume of Horace, and a few volumes of devotional treatises,

which had long been slumbering, moth-eaten, in these deserted cells, where, in ages that were past, monks had performed their severe devotions. The king immediately systematized the hours, and sat down to the regular employment of teaching his children. The son and the daughter, with minds prematurely developed by the agitations and excitements in the midst of which they had been cradled, clung to their parents with the most tender affection, and mitigated the horrors of their captivity by manifesting the most engaging sweetness of disposition, and by prosecuting their studies with untiring vigor. The queen and Madame Elizabeth employed themselves with their needles. They breakfasted at nine o'clock, and then devoted the forenoon to reading and study. At one o'clock they were permitted to walk for an hour, for exercise, in the court-yard of the prison, which had long been consigned to the dominion of rubbish and weeds. But in these walks they were daily exposed to the most cruel insults from the guards that were stationed over them. At two o'clock they dined. During the long hours of the evening the king read aloud. At night, the queen prepared the children for bed, and heard them repeat their prayers. Every day, however, more severe restrictions were imposed upon the captives. They were soon deprived of pens and paper; and then scissors, knives, and even needles were taken away, under the pretense that they might

be the instruments of suicide. They were allowed no communication of any kind with their friends without, and were debarred from all acquaintance with any thing transpiring in the world. In that gloomy tower of stone and iron they were buried. A faithful servant, however, adroitly opened communication with a news boy, who, under the pretense of selling the daily papers, recounted under their prison windows, in as loud a voice as he could, the leading articles of the journals he had for sale. The servant listened at the window with the utmost care, and then privately communicated the information to the king and queen.

The fate of the Princess Lamballe, who perished at this time, is highly illustrative of the horrors in the midst of which all the Royalists lived. This lovely woman, left a widow at eighteen, was attracted to the queen by her misfortunes, and became her most intimate and devoted friend. She lodged in an apartment adjoining to the queen's, that she might share all her perils. Occasionally the princess was absent to watch over and cheer an aged friend, the Duke de Penthièvre, her father-in-law, who resided at the Château de Vernon. She had gone a short time before the 20th of June to visit the aged duke, and Maria Antoinette, who foresaw the terrible storm about to burst upon them, wrote the following touching letter to her friend, urging her not to return to

the sufferings and dangers of the Tuileries. The letter was found in the hair of the Princess de Lamballe after her assassination.

"Do not leave Vernon, my dear Lamballe, before you are perfectly recovered. The good Duke de Penthièvre would be sorry and distressed, and we must all take care of his advanced age and respect his virtues. I have so often told you to take heed of yourself, that, if you love me, you must think of yourself; we shall require all of our strength in the times in which we live. Oh! do not return, or return as late as possible. Your heart would be too deeply wounded; you would have too many tears to shed over my misfortunes — you, who loved me so tenderly. This race of tigers which infests the kingdom would cruelly enjoy itself if it knew all the sufferings we undergo. Adieu, my dear Lamballe; I am always thinking of you, and you know I never change."

The princess, notwithstanding this advice, hastened to join her friend and to share her fate. She stood by the side of the queen during the sleeplessness of the night preceding the 20th of June, and clung to her during all those long and terrific hours in which the mob filled her apartment with language of obscenity, menace, and rage. She accompanied the royal family to the Assembly, shared with them the cheerless night in the old monastery of the Feuillants, and

followed them to the gloomy prison of the Temple. The stern decree of the Assembly, depriving the royal family of the presence of any of their friends, excluded the princess from the prison. She still, however, lived but to weep over the sorrows of those whom she so tenderly loved.

She was soon arrested as a Loyalist, and plunged, like the vilest criminal, into the prison of La Force. For the crime of loving the king and queen she was summoned to appear before the Revolutionary tribunal. The officers found her lying upon her pallet in the prison, surrounded by other wretched victims of lawless violence, scarcely able to raise her head from her pillow. She entreated them to leave her to die where she was. One of the officers leaned over her bed, and whispered to her that they were her friends, and that her life depended upon her entire compliance with their directions. She immediately arose and accompanied the guard down the prison stairs to the door. There two brutal-looking wretches, covered with blood, stood waiting to receive her. As they grasped her arms, she fainted. It was long before she recovered. As soon as she revived she was led before the judges. "Swear," said one of them, "that you love liberty and equality; and swear that you hate all kings and queens." "I am willing to swear the first," she replied, "but as to hatred of kings and queens, I can not swear it, for it is not in my heart."

Another judge, moved with pity by her youth and innocence, bent over her and whispered, "Swear anything, or you are lost." She still remained silent. "Well," said one, "you may go, but when you get into the street, shout *Vive la nation!*" The court-yard was filled with assassins, who cut down, with pikes and bludgeons, the condemned as they were led out from the court, and the mutilated and gory bodies of the slain were strewn over the pavement. Two soldiers took her by the arm to lead her out. As she passed from the door, the dreadful sight froze her heart with terror, and she exclaimed, forgetful of the peril, "O God! how horrible!" One of the soldiers, by a friendly impulse, immediately covered her mouth with his hand, that her exclamations might not be heard. She was led into the street, filled with assassins thirsting for the blood of the Royalists, and had advanced but a few steps, when a journeyman barber, staggering with intoxication and infuriated with carnage, endeavored, in a kind of brutal jesting, to strike her cap from her head with his long pike. The blow fell upon her forehead, cutting a deep gash, and the blood gushed out over her face. The assassins around, deeming this the signal for their onset, fell upon her. A blow from a bludgeon laid her dead upon the pavement. One, seizing her by the hair, with a saber cut off her head. Others tore her garments from her graceful limbs, and, cutting her

body into fragments, paraded the mutilated remains upon their pikes through the streets. The dissevered head they bore into an ale-house, and drank and danced around the ghastly trophy in horrid carousal. The rioting multitude then, in the frensy of intoxication, swarmed through the streets to the Temple, to torture the king and queen with the dreadful spectacle. The king, hearing the shoutings and tumultuous laughter of the mob, went to the window, and recognized, in the gory head thrust up to him upon the point of a pike, the features of his much-loved friend. He immediately led the queen to another part of the room, that she might be shielded from the dreadful spectacle.

Such were the flashes of terror which were ever gleaming through the bars of their windows. The horrors of each passing moment were magnified by the apprehension of still more dreadful evils to come. There was, however, one consolation yet left them. They were permitted to cling together. Locked in each other's arms, they could bow in prayer, and by sympathy and love sustain their fainting hearts. It was soon, however, thought that these indulgences were too great for dethroned royalty to enjoy. But a few days of their captivity had passed away, when, at midnight, they were aroused by an unusual uproar, and a band of brutal soldiers came clattering into their room with lanterns, and, in the most harsh and

insulting manner, commanded the immediate expulsion of all the servants and attendants of the royal family. Expostulation and entreaty were alike unavailing. The captives were stripped of all their friends, and passed the remainder of the night in sleeplessness and in despair. With the light of the morning they endeavored to nerve themselves to bear with patience this new trial. The king performed the part of a nurse in aiding to wash and dress the children. For the health of the children, they went into the court-yard of the prison before dinner for exercise and the fresh air. A soldier, stationed there to guard them, came up deliberately to the queen, and amused his companions by puffing tobacco smoke from his pipe into her face. The parents read upon the walls the names of their children, described as "whelps who ought to be strangled."

Six weeks of this almost unendurable agony passed away, when, one night, as the unhappy captives were clustered together, finding in their mutual and increasing affection a solace for all their woes, six municipal officers entered the tower, and read a decree ordering the entire separation of the king from the rest of his family. No language can express the consternation of the sufferers in view of this cruel measure. Without mercy, the officers immediately executed the barbarous command, by tearing the king from the embraces of his agonized wife and his grief-

distracted children. The king, overwhelmed with anguish in view of the sufferings which his wife and children must endure, most earnestly implored them not to separate him from his family. They were inflexible, and, hardly allowing the royal family one moment for their parting adieus, hurried the king away. It was the dark hour of a gloomy night. The few rays of light from the lanterns guided them through narrow passages, and over piles of rubbish to a distant angle of the huge and dilapidated fortress, where they thrust the king into an unfurnished cell, and, locking the door upon him, they left him with one tallow candle to make visible the gloom and the solitude. There was, in one corner, a miserable pallet, and heaps of moldering bricks and mortar were scattered over the damp floor. The king threw himself, in utter despair, upon this wretched bed, and counted, till the morning dawned, the steps of the sentinel pacing to and fro before his door. At length a small piece of bread and a bottle of water were brought him for his breakfast.

The anguish of the queen in the endurance of this most cruel separation was apparently as deep as human nature could experience. Her woe amounted to delirium. Pale and haggard, she walked to and fro, beseeching her jailers that they would restore to her and to her children the husband and the father. Her pathetic entreaties touched even their hearts of stone.

"I do believe," said one of them, "that these infernal women will make even me weep." After some time, they consented that the king should occasionally be permitted to partake his meals with his family, a guard being always present to hear what they should say. Immediately after the meal, he was to be taken back to his solitary imprisonment.

Such was the condition of the royal family during a period of about four months, varied by the capricious mercy or cruelty of the different persons who were placed as guards over them. Their clothes became soiled, threadbare and tattered; and they were deprived of all means of repairing their garments, lest they should convert needles and scissors into instruments of suicide. The king was not allowed the use of a razor to remove his beard; and the luxury of a barber to perform that essential part of his toilet was an expense which his foes could not incur. It was the studied endeavor of those who now rode upon the crested yet perilous billows of power, to degrade royalty to the lowest depths of debasement and contempt, that the beheading of the king and the queen might be regarded as merely the execution of a male and a female felon dragged from the loathsome dungeons of crime.

CHAPTER X.

Execution of the King.

Ominous preparations.— The king summoned before the Convention.— The king before the Convention.— Charges brought against him.— The king begs for a morsel of bread.— He is taken back to prison.—Advance of the allies.— Clamor for the king's life.— The king condemned to death. —Emotion of Malesherbes.— The king's demands.— The Abbé Edgeworth.— The last interview.— Anguish of the royal family.— The last embrace.— The separation.— The king receives the sacrament.— Mementoes to his family.— The king summoned to execution.— Brutality of the officers.— The brutal jailer.— The king conducted to execution.— A sad procession.— The admirable calmness of the king.— Attempt to rescue the king.— Its failure.— The guillotine.— Associations.— The king's thoughtfulness.— He undresses himself.— The king ascends the scaffold.— His speech.— The last act in the tragedy.— Burial of the king's body.— The blood-red obelisk.— Character of Louis.

On the 11th of December, 1792, just four months after the royal family had been consigned to the Temple, as the captives were taking their breakfast, a great noise of the rolling of drums, the neighing of horses, and the tramp of a numerous multitude was heard around the prison walls; soon some one entered, and informed the king that these were the preparations which were making to escort him to his trial. The king knew perfectly well that this was the step which preceded his execution, and, as he thought of the awful situation of

his family, he threw himself into his chair and buried his face in his hands, and for two hours remained in that attitude immovable. He was roused from his painful revery by the entrance of the officers to conduct him to the bar of his judges, from whom he was aware he could expect no mercy. "I follow you," said the king, "not in obedience to the orders of the Convention, but because my enemies are the more powerful." He put on his brown great-coat and hat, and silently descending the stairs to the door of the tower, entered a carriage which was there awaiting him. As he had long been deprived of his razors, his chin and cheeks were covered with masses of hair. His garments hung loosely around his emaciated frame, and all dignity of aspect was lost in the degraded condition to which designing cruelty had reduced him. The captive monarch was escorted through the streets by regiments of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, every man furnished with fifteen rounds of ammunition to repel any attempts at a rescue. A countless throng of people lined the streets through which the illustrious prisoner was conveyed. The multitude gazed upon the melancholy procession in profound silence. He soon stood before the bar of the Convention. "Louis," said the president, "the French nation accuses you. You are about to hear the charges which are to be preferred. Louis be seated." The king listened with perfect tranquillity

and self-possession to a long catalogue of accusations, in which his efforts to sustain the fallen monarchy, and his exertions to protect himself and family from insults and death, were construed into crimes against the nation.

The examination of the king was long, minute, and was conducted by those who were impatient for his blood. At its close, the king, perfectly exhausted by mental excitement and the want of refreshment, was led back into the waiting-room of the Convention. He was scarcely able to stand for faintness. He saw a soldier eating a piece of bread. He approached, and, in a whisper, begged him for a piece, and ate it. Here was the monarch of thirty millions of people, in the heart of his proud capital, and with all his palaces around him, actually begging bread of a poor soldier. The king was again placed in the carriage, and conveyed back to his prison in the Temple. As the cortège passed slowly by the palace of the Tuileries, the scene of all his former grandeur and happiness, the king gazed long and sadly on the majestic pile, so lost in thought that he heeded not, and apparently heard not the insulting cries which were resounding around him. As the king entered the Temple, he raised his eyes most wistfully to the queen's apartment, but the windows were so barred that no glances could be interchanged. The king was conducted to his apartment, and was informed

that he could no longer be permitted to hold any communication whatever with the other members of his family. He contrived, however, by means of a tangle of thread, in which was inclosed a piece of paper perforated by a needle, to get a note to the queen, and to receive a few words in return. He, however, felt that his doom was sealed, and began from that hour to look forward to his immortality. He made his will, in which he spoke in most affecting terms of his wife, and his children, and his enemies, commending them all to the protection of God.

An indescribable gloom now reigned throughout Paris. The allied armies on the frontiers were gradually advancing. The French troops were defeated. It was feared that the Royalists would rise, and join the invaders, and rescue the king. Desperadoes rioted through the streets, clamoring for the blood of their monarch. With knives and bludgeons they surrounded the Convention, threatening the lives of all if they did not consign the king to the guillotine. The day for the final decision came — Shall the king live or die? On that day the heart of the metropolis throbbed as never before. It was the 20th of January, 1793. The Convention had already been in uninterrupted session for fifteen hours. The clamor of the tumultuous and threatening mob gave portentous warning of the doom which awaited the members of the Assembly should they dare to spare the life of the king. One by one

the deputies mounted the tribune as their names were called in alphabetical order, and gave their vote. For some time death and exile seemed equally balanced. The results of the vote were read. The Convention comprised seven hundred and twenty-one voters, three hundred and thirty-four of whom voted for exile, and three hundred and eighty-seven for death.

Louis sat alone in his prison, calmly awaiting the decision. He lay down that night knowing that his doom was sealed, and yet not knowing what that doom was. Malesherbes, the venerable friend who had volunteered for his defense, came to communicate the mournful tidings. He fell at the king's feet so overcome with emotion that he could not speak. The king understood the language of his silence and his tears, and uttered himself the sentence, "Death." But a few moments elapsed before the officers of the Convention came, in all the pomp and parade of the land, to communicate to the king his doom to the guillotine in twenty-four hours. With perfect calmness, and fixing his eye immovably upon his judges he heard the reading of the sentence. The reading concluded, the king presented a paper to the deputies, which he first read to them in the clear and commanding tones of a monarch upon his throne, demanding a respite of three days, in order to prepare to appear before God; also permission to see his family, and to converse with a priest. The Conven-

tion, angry at these requests, informed the king that he might see any priest he pleased, and that he might see his family, but that the execution must take place in twenty-four hours from the time of the sentence. Darkness had again fallen upon the city, when the minister of religion, M. Edgeworth, was led through the gloomy streets, to administer the consolations of piety to the condemned monarch. As he entered the apartment of the king, he fell at his feet and burst into tears. Louis for a moment wept, when, recovering himself, he said, "Pardon me this momentary weakness. I have so long lived among enemies, that habit has rendered me insensible to hatred. The sight of a faithful friend restores my sensibility, and moves me to tears in spite of myself." A long conversation ensued, in which the king inquired, with the greatest interest, respecting the fate of his numerous friends. He read his will with the utmost deliberation, his voice faltering only when he alluded to his wife, children and sister. At seven o'clock he was to have his last agonizing interview with his beloved family, and the thought of this agitated him far more than the prospect of the scaffold.

The hour for the last sad meeting arrived. The king, having prepared his heart by prayer for the occasion, descended into a small unfurnished room, where he was to meet his family. The door opened. The queen, leading his son, and Madame Elizabeth,

leading his daughter, with trembling, fainting steps, entered the room. Not a word was uttered. The king threw himself upon a bench, drew the queen to his right side, his sister to the left, and their arms encircled his neck, and their heads hung upon his breast. The son climbed upon his father's knee, clinging with his arms franticly to his bosom; and the daughter, throwing herself at his feet, buried her head in his lap, her beautiful hair, in disordered ringlets, falling over her shoulders. A long half hour thus passed, in which not one single articulate word was spoken, but the anguish of these united hearts was expressed in cries and lamentations which pierced through the stone walls of their prison, and were heard by passers by in the streets. But human nature could not long endure this intensity of agony. Total exhaustion ensued. Their tears dried upon their cheeks; embraces, kisses, whispers of tenderness and love, and woe ensued, which lasted for two hours.

The king then clasped them each in a long embrace, pressing his lips to their cheeks, and prepared to retire. Clinging to each other in an inseparable group, they approached the stair-case which the king was to ascend, when their piercing, heart-rending cries were renewed. The king, summoning all his fortitude to his aid, tore himself from them, and, in most tender accents, cried "*Adieu! adieu!*" hastily ascended the stairs and disappeared, having partially

promised that he would see them again in the morning. The princess royal fell fainting upon the floor, and was borne insensible to her room. The king, reaching his apartment, threw himself into a chair, and exclaimed, "What an interview I have had! Why do I love so fondly? Alas! why am I so fondly loved? But we have now done with time, let us occupy ourselves with eternity."

The hour of midnight had now arrived. The king threw himself upon his bed, and slept as calmly, as peacefully, as though he had never known a sorrow. At five o'clock he was awakened, and received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Then, taking a small parcel from his bosom, and removing his wedding ring from his finger, he said to an attendant, "After my death, I wish you to give this seal to my son, this ring to the queen. Say to the queen, my dear children, and my sister, that I had promised to see them this morning, but that I desire to spare them the agony of this bitter separation twice over. How much it has cost me to part without receiving their last embraces!" Here his utterance was impeded by sobs. He then called for some scissors, that he might cut off locks of hair for his family. As he soon after stood by the stove, warming himself, he exclaimed, "How happy am I that I maintained my Christian faith while on the throne! What would have been my condition now, were it not for this hope!" Soon

faint gleams of the light of day began to penetrate through the iron bars and planks which guarded his windows. It was the signal for the beating of drums, the tramp of armed men, the rolling of heavy carriages of artillery, and the clattering of horses' hoofs. As the escort were arriving at their stations in the court-yard of the Temple, a great noise was heard upon the stair-case. "They have come for me," said the king; and, rising with perfect calmness and without a tremor, he opened the door. It was a false summons. Again and again, under various pretexts, the door was opened, until nine o'clock, when a tumultuous noise upon the stair-case announced the approach of a body of armed men. Twelve municipal officers and twelve soldiers entered the apartment. The soldiers formed in two lines. The king with a serene air, placed himself between the double lines, and, looking to one of the municipal officers, said, presenting to him a roll of paper, which was his last will and testament, "I beg of you to transmit this paper to the queen." The municipal brutally replied, "That is no affair of mine. I am here to conduct you to the scaffold." "True," the king replied, and gave the paper to another, who received it. The king then, taking his hat and declining his coat, notwithstanding the severity of the cold, said, with a dignified gesture and a tone of command, "Let us go." The king led the way, followed rather than conducted

by his escort. Descending the stairs, he met the turnkey, who had been disrespectful to him the night before, and whom the king had reproached for his insolence. Louis immediately approached the unfeeling jailer, and said to him, "Mathey, I was somewhat warm with you yesterday; forgive me, for the sake of this hour." The imbruted monster turned upon his heel without any reply.

As he crossed the court-yard of the Temple, he anxiously gazed upon the windows of the apartment where the queen, his sister, and his children were imprisoned. The windows were so guarded by plank shutters that no glances from the loved ones within could meet his eye. As the heart of the king dwelt upon the scenes of anguish which he knew must be passing there, it seemed for a moment that his fortitude would fail him. But, with a violent effort, he recovered his composure and passed on. At the entrance of the Temple a carriage awaited the king. Two soldiers entered the carriage, and took seats by his side. The king's confessor also rode in the carriage. It was the 21st of January, 1793, a gloomy winter's day. Dark clouds lowered in the sky. Fog and smoke darkened the city. The atmosphere was raw, and cold in the extreme. Nature seemed in harmony with man's deed of cruelty and crime. The shops were all closed, the markets were empty. No citizens were allowed to cross the streets on the line

of march, or even to show themselves at the windows. Sixty drums kept up a deafening clamor as the vast procession of cavalry, infantry, and artillery marched before, behind, and on each side of the carriage. Cannon, loaded with grape-shot, with matches lighted, guarded the main street on the line of march, to prevent the possibility of an attempt even at rescue. The noise of the drums, the clatter of the iron hoofs of the horses, and the rumbling of the heavy pieces of artillery over the pavements prevented all discourse, and the king, leaning back in his carriage, surrendered himself to such reflections as the awful hour would naturally suggest. The perfect calmness of the king excited the admiration of those who were near his person, and a few hearts in the multitude, touched with pity, gave utterance to the cry of "Pardon! pardon!" The sounds, however, died away in the throng, awakening no sympathetic response. As the procession moved along, no sound proceeded from human lips. A feeling of awe appeared to have taken possession of the whole city. The sentiment of loyalty had, for so many centuries, pervaded the bosoms of the French people, that they could not conduct their monarch to the scaffold without the deepest emotions of awe. A feeling of consternation oppressed every heart in view of the deed now to be perpetrated. But it was too late to retract. Perhaps there was not an individual in that vast throng who

did not shudder in view of the crime of that day. At one spot on the line of march, seven or eight young men, in the spirit of desperate heroism which the occasion excited, hoping that the pity of the multitude would cause them to rally for their aid, broke through the line, sword in hand, and, rushing toward the carriage, shouted, "Help for those who would save the king." Three thousand young men had enrolled themselves in the conspiracy to respond to this call. But the preparations to resist such an attempt were too formidable to allow of any hopes of success. The few who heroically made the movement were instantly cut down. At the Place de la Revolution, one hundred thousand people were gathered in silence around the scaffold. The instrument of death, with its blood-red beams and posts, stood prominent above the multitudinous assemblage in the damp, murky air.

The guillotine was erected in the center of the Place de la Revolution, directly in the front of the garden of the Tuileries. This celebrated instrument of death was invented in Italy by a physician named Guillotin, and from him received its name. A heavy ax, raised by machinery between two upright posts, by the touching of a spring fell, gliding down between two grooves, and severed the head from the body with the rapidity of lightning. The palace in which Louis had passed the hours of his infancy,

and his childhood, and the days of his early grandeur; the magnificent gardens of the palace, where he had so often been greeted with acclamations; the spacious Elysian Fields, the pride of Paris, were all spread around, as if in mockery of the sacrifice which was there to be offered. This whole space was crowded with a countless multitude, clustered upon the house tops, darkening the windows, swinging upon the trees, to witness the tragic spectacle of the beheading of their king. Arrangements had been made to have the places immediately around the scaffold filled by the unrelenting foes of the monarch, that no emotions of pity might retard the bloody catastrophe. As the carriage approached the place of execution, the hum of the mighty multitude was hushed, and a silence as of death, prevaded the immense throng.

At last the carriage stopped at the foot of the scaffold. The king raised his eyes, and said to his confessor, in a low but calm tone, "We have arrived, I think." By a silent gesture the confessor assented. The king, ever more mindful of others than of himself, placed his hand upon the knee of the confessor, and said to the officers and executioners who were crowded around the coach, "Gentlemen, I recommend to your protection this gentleman. See that he be not insulted after my death. I charge you to watch over him." As no one made any reply, the king repeated the admonition in tones still more earnest.

"Yes! yes!" interrupted one, jeeringly, "make your mind easy about that; we will take care of him. Let us alone for that." Three of the executioners then approached the king to undress him. He waved them from him with an authoritative gesture, and himself took off his coat, his cravat, and turned down his shirt collar. The executioners then came with cords to bind him to a plank. "What do you intend to do?" he exclaimed, indignantly. "We intend to bind you," they replied, as they seized his hands. To be bound was an unexpected indignity, at which the blood of the monarch recoiled. "No! no!" he exclaimed, "I will never submit to that. Do your business, but you shall not bind me." The king resisted. The executioners called for help. A scene of violence was about to ensue. The king turned his eye to his confessor, as if for counsel. "Sire," said the Abbé Edgeworth, "submit unresistingly to this fresh outrage, as the last resemblance to the Savior who is about to recompense your sufferings." Louis raised his eyes to heaven, and said, "Assuredly there needed nothing less than the example of the Savior to induce me to submit to such an indignity." He then reached his hands out to the executioners, and said, "Do as you will; I will drink the cup to the dregs." Leaning upon the arm of his friend, he ascended the steep and slippery steps of the guillotine; then walking across the platform firmly, he looked

for a moment intently upon the sharp blade of the ax, and turning suddenly to the populace, exclaimed, in a voice clear and distinct, which penetrated to the remotest extremities of the square, "People, I die innocent of all the crimes laid to my charge. I pardon the authors of my death, and pray God that the blood you are about to shed may never fall again upon France. And you, unhappy people—" Here the drums were ordered to beat, and the deafening clamor drowned his words. The king turned slowly to the guillotine and surrendered himself to the executioners. He was bound to the plank. "The plank sank. The blade glided. The head fell."

One of the executioners seized the severed head of the monarch by the hair, and, raising the bloody trophy of their triumph, showed it to the shuddering throng, while the blood dripped from it on the scaffold. A few desperadoes dipped their sabers and the points of their pikes in the blood, and, waving them in the air, shouted "Vive la Republique!" The multitude, however, responded not to the cry. Explosions of artillery announced to the distant parts of the city that the sacrifice was consummated. The remains of the monarch were conveyed on a covered cart to the cemetery of the Madeleine, and lime was thrown into the grave, that the body might be speedily and entirely consumed.

Over the grave where he was buried Napoleon

subsequently began the splendid Temple of Glory, in commemoration of the monarch and other victims who fell in the Revolution. The completion of the edifice was frustrated by the fall of Napoleon. The Bourbons, however, on their restoration to the throng, finished the building, and it is now called the Church of the Madeleine, and it constitutes one of the most beautiful structures of Paris. The spot on which the monarch fell is now marked by a colossal obelisk of blood-red granite, which the French government, in 1833, transported from Thebes, in Upper Egypt. Louis was unquestionably one of the most conscientious and upright sovereigns who ever sat upon a throne. He loved his people, and earnestly desired to do every thing in his power to promote their welfare. And it can hardly be doubted that he was guided through life, and sustained through the awful trial of his death, by the principle of sincere piety. The tidings of his execution sent a thrill of horror through Europe, and fastened such a stigma upon Republicanism as to pave the way for the re-erection of the throne.

CHAPTER XI.

Trial and Execution of Maria Antoinette.

Sufferings of the queen.— Announcement of her husband's death.— Cruel decree.— Maria's defense of her boy.— The dauphin's cell.— The queen summoned to the Conciergerie.— Painful partings.— The Conciergerie. — Loathsome apartments of the queen.— The jailer's wife.— The jailer's daughter.— The garter.— Diguity of the queen during her trial.— She is condemned to death.— The queen dressed for the guillotine.— Her hands bound.— Car of the condemned.— Indignities heaped upon the queen.— Arrival at the guillotine.— The queen's composure.— The queen's prayer. — Maternal love.— The last adieu.— End of the tragedy.

While the king was suffering upon the guillotine, the queen, with Madame Elizabeth and the children, remained in their prison, in the endurance of anguish as severe as could be laid upon human hearts. The queen was plunged into a continued succession of swoons, and when she heard the booming of the artillery, which announced that the fatal ax had fallen and that her husband was headless, her companions feared that her life was also, at the same moment, to be extinguished. Soon the rumbling of wheels, the rolling of heavy pieces of cannon, and the shouts of the multitude penetrating through the bars of her cell, proclaimed the return of the procession from the scene of death. The queen

was extremely anxious to be informed of all the details of the last moments of the king, but her foes refused her even this consolation.

Days and nights now lingered slowly along while the captives were perishing in monotonous misery. The severity of their imprisonment was continually increased by new deprivations. No communications from the world without were permitted to reach their ears. Shutters were so arranged that even the sky was scarcely visible, and no employment whatever was allowed them to beguile their hours of woe. About four months after the death of the king, a loud noise was heard one night at the door of their chamber, and a band of armed men came tumultuously in, and read to the queen an order that her little son should be entirely separated from her, and imprisoned by himself. The poor child, as he heard this cruel decree, was frantic with terror, and, throwing himself into his mother's arms, shrieked out, "O mother! mother! mother! do not abandon me to those men. They will kill me as they did papa." The queen was thrown into a perfect delirium of mental agony. She placed her child upon the bed, and, stationing herself before him, with eyes glaring like a tigress, and with almost superhuman energy, declared that they should tear her in pieces before they should touch her poor boy. The officers were subdued by this affecting exhibition of maternal love, and forbore violence. For

two hours she thus contended against all their solicitations, until, entirely overcome by exhaustion, she fell in a swoon upon the floor. The child was then hurried from the apartment, and placed under the care of a brutal wretch, whose name, Simon, inhumanity has immortalized. The unhappy child threw himself upon the floor of his cell, and for two days remained without any nourishment. The queen abandoned herself to utter despair. Madame Elizabeth and Maria Theresa performed all the service of the chamber, making the beds, sweeping the room, and attending upon the queen. No importunities on the part of Maria Antoinette could obtain for her the favor of a single interview with her child.

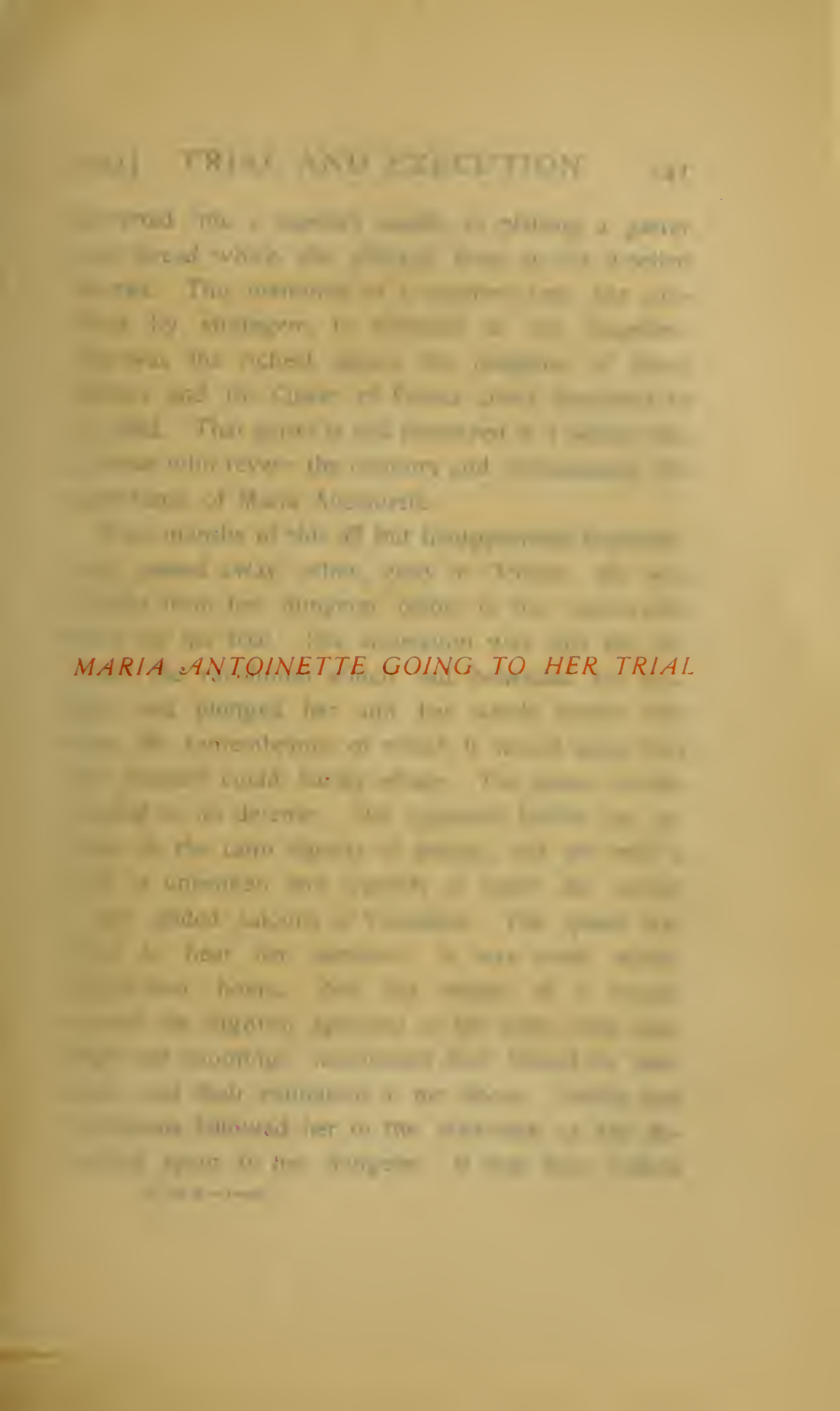
Three more months passed slowly away, when, early in August, the queen was aroused from her sleep at midnight by armed men, with lanterns, bursting into her room. With unfeeling barbarity, they ordered her to accompany them to the prison of the Conciergerie, the most dismal prison in Paris, where those doomed to die awaited their execution. The queen listened, unmoved, to the order, for her heart had now become callous even to woe. Her daughter and Madame Elizabeth threw themselves at the feet of the officers, and most pathetically, but unavailingly, implored them not to deprive them of their only remaining solace. The queen was compelled to rise and dress in the presence of the wretches who ex-

ulted over her abasement. She clasped her daughter for one frantic moment convulsively to her heart, covered her with embraces and kisses, spoke a few words of impassioned tenderness to her sister, and then, as if striving by violence to throw herself from the room, she inadvertently struck her forehead a severe blow against the low portal of the door. "Did you hurt you?" inquired one of the men. "Oh no!" was the despairing reply, "nothing now can further harm me."

A few lights glimmered dimly from the street lamps as the queen entered the carriage, guarded by soldiers, and was conveyed through the somber streets to her last earthly abode. The prison of the Conciergerie consists of a series of subterranean dungeons beneath the floor of the Palais de Justice. More damp, dark, gloomy dens of stone and iron the imagination can not conceive. Down the dripping and slippery steps she was led, groping her way by the feeble light of a tallow candle, until she approached, through a labyrinth of corridors, an iron door. It grated upon its hinges, and she was thrust in, two soldiers accompanying her, and the door was closed. It was midnight. The lantern gave just light enough to show her the horrors of her cell. The floor was covered with mud and water, while little streams trickled down the stone walls. A miserable pallet in one corner, an old pine table and one chair, were all

the comforts the kingdom of France could afford its queen.

The heart of the wife of the jailer was touched with compassion in view of this unmitigated misery. She did not dare to speak words of kindness, for they would be reported by the guard. She, however, prepared for her some food, ventured to loan her some needles and a ball of worsted, and communicated intelligence of her daughter and son. The Committee of Public Safety heard of these acts of mercy, and the jailer and his wife were immediately arrested, and plunged into those dungeons into which they would have allowed the spirit of humanity to enter. The shoes of the queen saturated with water, soon fell from her feet. Her stockings and her dress, from the humidity of the air, were in tatters. Two soldiers, with drawn swords, were stationed by her side night and day, with the command never, even for one moment, to turn their eyes from her. The daughter of the new jailer, touched with compassion, and regardless of the fate of the predecessors of her parents, entered her cell every morning to dress her whitened locks, which sorrow had bleached. The queen ventured one day to solicit an additional counterpane for her bed. "How dare you make such a request?" replied the solicitor general of the commune; "you deserve to be sent to the guillotine!" The queen succeeded secretly, by means of a toothpick, which she



MARIA ANTOINETTE GOING TO HER TRIAL

converted into a tapestry needle, in plaiting a garter from thread which she plucked from an old woollen coverlet. This memorial of a mother's love she contrived, by stratagem, to transmit to her daughter. This was the richest legacy the daughter of Maria Theresa and the Queen of France could bequeath to her child. That garter is still preserved as a sacred relic by those who revere the memory and commiserate the misfortunes of Maria Antoinette.

Two months of this all but insupportable imprisonment passed away, when, early in October, she was brought from her dungeon below to the court-room above for her trial. Her accusation was that she abhorred the revolution which had beheaded her husband, and plunged her and her whole family into woes, the remembrance of which it would seem that even eternity could hardly efface. The queen condescended to no defense. She appeared before her accusers in the calm dignity of despair, and yet with a spirit as unbroken and queenly as when she moved in the gilded saloons of Versailles. The queen was called to hear her sentence. It was death within twenty-four hours. Not the tremor of a muscle showed the slightest agitation as the mob, with clappings and shoutings, manifested their hatred for their victim, and their exultation at her doom. Insults and execrations followed her to the stair-case as she descended again to her dungeon. It was four o'clock

in the morning. A few rays of the dawning day struggled through the bars of her prison window, and she seemed to smile with a faint expression of pleasure at the thought that her last day of earthly woe had dawned. She called for pen and ink, and wrote a very affecting letter to her sister and children. Having finished the letter, she repeatedly and passionately kissed it, as if it were the last link which bound her to the loved ones from whom she was so soon to be separated by death. She then, as if done with earth, kneeled down and prayed, and with a tranquillized spirit, threw herself upon her bed, and fell into a profound slumber.

An hour or two passed away, when the kind daughter of the jailer came, with weeping eyes and a throbbing heart, into the cell to dress the queen for the guillotine. It was the 14th of October, 1793. Maria Antoinette arose with alacrity, and, laying aside her prison-worn garments of mourning, put on her only remaining dress, a white robe, emblematic of the joy with which she bade adieu to earth. A white handkerchief was spread over her shoulders, and a white cap, bound to her head by a black ribbon, covered her hair. It was a cold and foggy morning, and the moaning wind drove clouds of mist through the streets. But the day had hardly dawned before crowds of people thronged the prison, and all Paris seemed in motion to enjoy the spectacle of the suf-

ferings of their queen. At eleven o'clock the executioners entered her cell, bound her hands behind her, and led her out from the prison. The queen had nerved her heart to die in the spirit of defiance to her foes. She thought, perhaps, too much of man, too little of God. Queenly pride rather than Christian resignation inspired her soul. Expecting to be conducted to the scaffold, as the king had been, in a close carriage, she, for a moment, recoiled with horror when she was led to the ignominious car of the condemned, and was commanded to enter it. This car was much like a common hay cart, entirely open, and guarded by a rude but strong railing. The female furies who surrounded her shouted with laughter, and cried out incessantly, "Down with the Austrian!" "Down with the Austrian!" The queen was alone in the cart. Her hands were tied behind her. She could not sit down. She could not support herself against the jolting of the cart upon the rough pavement. The car started. The queen was thrown from her equilibrium. She fell this way and that way. Her bonnet was crowded over her eyes. Her gray locks floated in the damp morning air. Her coarse dress, disarranged, excited derision. As she was violently pitched to and fro, notwithstanding her desperate endeavors to retain the dignity of her appearance, the wretches shouted, "These are not your cushions of Trianon." It was a long ride, through

the infuriated mob, to the scaffold, which was reared directly in front of the garden of the Tuileries.

As the car arrived at the entrance of the gardens of the palace where Maria had passed through so many vicissitudes of joy and woe, it stopped for a moment, apparently that the queen might experience a few more emotions of torture as she contemplated the abode of her past grandeur. Maria leaned back upon the railing, utterly regardless of the clamor around her, and fixed her eyes long and steadfastly upon the theater of all her former happiness. The thought of her husband, her children, her home, for a moment overcame her, and a few tears trickled down her cheeks and fell upon the floor of the cart. But, instantly regaining her composure, she looked around again upon the multitude, waving like an ocean over the whole amphitheater, with an air of majesty expressive of her superiority over all earthly ills. A few turns more of the wheels brought her to the foot of the guillotine. It was upon the same spot where her husband had fallen. She calmly, firmly looked at the dreadful instrument of death, scrutinizing all its arrangements, and contemplating, almost with an air of satisfaction, the sharp and glittering knife, which was so soon to terminate all her earthly sufferings. Two of the executioners assisted her by the elbows as she endeavored to descend from the cart. She waited for no directions, but with a firm

and yet not hurried tread, ascended the steps of the scaffold. By accident, she trod upon the foot of one of the executioners. "Pardon me!" she exclaimed, with all the affability and grace with which she would have apologized to a courtier in the midst of the social festivities of the Little Trianon. She kneeled down, raised her eyes to heaven, and in a low but heart-rending prayer, all forgetful of herself, implored God to protect her sister and her helpless children. She was deaf to the clamor of the infuriate mob around her. She was insensible to the dishonor of her own appearance, with disheveled locks blinding her eyes, and with her faded garments crumpled and disarranged by the rough jostling of the cart. She forgot the scaffold on which she stood, the cords which bound her hands, the blood-thirsty executioners by her side, the fatal knife gleaming above her head. Her thoughts, true to the irrepressible instincts of maternal love, wandered back to the dungeons from whence she had emerged, and lingered with anguish around the pallets where her orphan, friendless, persecuted children were entombed. Her last prayer was the prayer of agony. She rose from her knees, and, turning her eyes toward the tower of the Temple, and speaking in tones which would have pierced any hearts but those which surrounded her, exclaimed, "Adieu! adieu! once again, my dear children. I go to rejoin your father."

She was bound to the plank. Slowly it descended till the neck of the queen was brought under the groove down which the fatal ax was to glide. The executioner, hardened by deeds of daily butchery, could not look upon this spectacle of the misery of the Queen of France unmoved. His hand trembled as he endeavored to disengage the ax, and there was a moment's delay. The ax fell. The dissevered head dropped into the basket placed to receive it. The executioner seized it by the hair, gushing with blood, raised it high above his head, and walked around the elevated platform of the guillotine, exhibiting the bloody trophy to the assembled multitude. One long shout of "Vive la Republique!" rent the air, and the long and dreadful tragedy of the life of Maria Antoinette was closed.

The remains of the queen were thrown into a pine coffin and hurried to an obscure burial. Upon the records of the Church of La Madeleine we now read the charge, "*For the coffin of the Widow Capet, seven francs.*"

CHAPTER XII.

The Princess Elizabeth, the Dauphin, and the Princess Royal.

The dauphin and the princesses.— Painful uncertainty.— Sufferings of the princesses.— Their dismal cell.— Painful thoughts.— Unwelcome visitors. — The princesses separated.— Brutality of the soldiers.— Elizabeth taken before the tribunal.— A group of noble captives.— Trial of Madame Elizabeth.— Her condemnation.— Sad reverses.— Character of Madame Elizabeth.— Madame Elizabeth at the guillotine.— Execution of her companions.— Death of Madame Elizabeth.— Her faith and piety.— Situation of the dauphin.— The brute Simon.— Inhuman treatment of the dauphin.— He becomes insane.— The reaction.— Change in the dauphin's treatment.— Death of the dauphin.— Sympathy awakened by it.— Situation of the princess royal.— Her deep sufferings.— Sympathy for the princess royal.— She is released.— Arrival of the princess royal in Vienna.— Her settled melancholy.— Love felt for Maria.— She recovers her cheerfulness.— Maria's marriage.— Her present residence.— Advanced age of Maria.— Still retains traces of her early sorrows.

When Maria Antoinette was taken from the Temple and consigned to the dungeons of the Conciergerie, there to await her trial for her life, the dauphin was imprisoned by himself, though but a child seven years of age, in a gloomy cell, where he was entirely excluded from any communication with his aunt and sister. The two latter princesses remained in the room from which the queen had been taken. They were, however, in the most painful uncertainty respecting her

fate. Their jailers were commanded to give them no information whatever respecting the external world. Their prison was a living tomb, in which they were allowed to breathe, and that was all. The Princess Elizabeth had surmised, from various little incidents, what had been the fate of the queen, but she tried to cheer the young, and affectionate, and still beautiful child with the hope that her mother yet lived, and that they might meet again. Eight months of the most dreary captivity rolled slowly away. It was winter, and yet they were allowed no fire to dispel the gloom and the chill of their cell. They were deprived of all books. They were not allowed the use of pens or paper. The long winter nights came. In their cell there was but a few hours during which the rays of the sun struggled faintly through the barred windows. Night, long, dismal, impenetrable, like that of Egypt, enveloped them for fifteen hours. They counted the strokes of the clocks in the distant churches. They listened to the hum of the vast and mighty metropolis, like the roar of the surf upon the shore. Reflections full of horror crowded upon them. The king was beheaded. The queen was, they knew not where, either dead or in the endurance of the most fearful sufferings. The young dauphin was imprisoned by himself, and they knew only that the gentle, affectionate, idolized child was exposed to every cruelty which barbarism could inflict upon him.

What was to be their own fate? Were they to linger out the remnant of their days in this wretched captivity? Would their inhuman jailers envy them the consolation they found in each other's arms, and separate them? Were they also to perish upon the guillotine, where nearly all whom they had loved had already perished? Were they ever to be released? If so what joy could there remain on earth for them after their awful sufferings and bereavements! Woes, such as they had endured, were too deep ever to be effaced from the mind. Nearly eight months thus lingered slowly along, in which they saw only brutal and insulting jailers, ate the coarsest food, and were clothed in the unwashed and tattered garb of the prison. Time seemed to have stopped its flight, and to have changed into a weary, woeful eternity.

On the 9th of May, the Princess Elizabeth and her niece, who had received the name of Maria Theresa in memory of her grandmother, were retiring to bed. They were enveloped in midnight darkness. With their arms around each other's necks, they were kneeling at the foot of the bed in prayer. Suddenly a great noise was heard at the door, accompanied with repeated and violent blows, almost heavy enough to shiver the door from its hinges. Madame Elizabeth hastened to withdraw a bolt, which constituted an inner fastening, when some soldiers rushed in with their lanterns, and said to Madame Elizabeth, "You

must immediately follow us." "And my niece," replied the princess, ever forgetful of herself in her thoughtfulness for others, "can she go too?" "We want you only now!" was the answer; "we will take care of her by-and-by." The aunt foresaw that the hour for the long-dreaded separation had come. She threw her arms around the neck of the trembling maiden, and wept in uncontrollable grief. The brutal soldiers, unmoved by these tears, loaded them both with reproaches and insults, as belonging to the detested race of kings, and imperiously commanded the Princess Elizabeth immediately to depart. She endeavored to whisper a word of hope into the ear of her despairing niece. "I shall probably soon return again, my dear Maria." "No citoyenne, you won't," rudely interrupted one of the jailers; "you will never ascend these stairs again. So take your bonnet and come down." Bathing the face of the young girl with her tears, invoking the blessing of heaven upon her, turning again and again to infold her in a last embrace, she was led out by the soldiers, and conducted down the dark and damp stairs to the gate. Here the soldiers rudely searched her person anew, and then thrust her into a carriage. It was midnight. The carriage was driven violently through the deserted streets to the Conciergerie. The Tribunal was, even at that hour, in session, for in those days of blood, when the slide of the guillotine

had no repose from morning till night, the day did not contain hours enough for the work of condemnation. The princess was conducted immediately into the presence of the Revolutionary Tribunal. A few questions were asked her, and then she was led into a hall, and left to catch such repose as she could upon the bench where Maria Antoinette but a few months before had awaited her condemnation.

The morning had hardly dawned when she was again conducted to the Tribunal, in company with twenty-four others, of every age and of both sexes, whose crime was that they were nobles. Ladies were there, illustrious in virtue and rank, who had formerly graced the brilliant assemblies of the Tuileries and of Versailles. Young men, whose family names had been renowned for ages, stood there to answer for the crime of possessing a distinguished name. While looking upon this group of nobles, gathered before that merciless tribunal, where judgment was almost certain condemnation, the public accuser, with cruel irony remarked, "Of what can Madame Elizabeth complain, when she sees herself at the foot of the guillotine, surrounded by her faithful nobility? She can now fancy herself back again in the gay festivities of Versailles."

The charges against Elizabeth were, that she was the sister of a tyrant, and that she loved that royal family whom the nation had adjudged not fit to live.

"If my brother had been the tyrant you declare him to have been," the princess remarked, "you would not be where you now are, nor I before you." But it is vain for the lamb to plead with the wolf. She was condemned to die. She listened to her sentence with the most perfect composure, and almost with satisfaction. The only favor she asked was, that she might see a priest, and receive the consolations of religion, according to the faith she professed. Even this request was denied her. The crime of loyalty was of too deep a dye to allow of any, the slightest, mitigation of punishment. From the judgment hall she was led down into one of the dungeons of the Conciergerie, where, with the rest of her companions, she awaited the execution of their doom. It was, indeed, a melancholy meeting. These illustrious captives had formerly dwelt in the highest splendor which earth allows. They had met in regal palaces, surrounded by all the pomp and grandeur of courts. Now, after months of the most cruel imprisonment, after passing through scenes of the most protracted woe, having been deprived of all their possessions, of all their ancestral honors, having surrendered one after another of those most dear to them to the guillotine, they were collected in a dark and foul dungeon, cold and wet, hungry and exhausted, to be conveyed in a few hours, in the cart of the condemned, to the scaffold. The character of Elizabeth was such, her

weanedness from the world, her mild and heavenly spirit, as to have secured almost the idolatrous veneration of those who knew her. The companions of her misfortunes now clustered around her, as the one to whom they must look for support and strength in this awful hour. The princess, more calm and peaceful even than when surrounded by all the splendors of royalty, looked forward joyfully to the guillotine as the couch of sweet and lasting repose. Faith enabled her to leave the children, now the only tie which bound her to earth, in the hands of God, and, conscious that she had done with all things earthly, her thoughts were directed to those mansions of rest which, she doubted not, were in reserve for her. She bowed her head with a smile to the executioner as he cut off her long tresses in preparation for the knife. The locks fell at her feet, and even the executioners divided them among them as memorials of her loveliness and virtue.

Her hands were bound behind her, and she was placed in the cart with twenty-two companions of noble birth, and she was doomed to wait at the foot of the scaffold till all those heads had fallen, before her turn could come. The youth, the beauty, the innocence, the spotless life of the princess seemed to disarm the populace of their rage, and they gazed upon her in silence and almost with admiration. Her

name had ever been connected with every thing that was pure and kind. And even a feeling of remorse seemed to pervade the concourse surrounding the scaffold in view of the sacrifice of so blameless a victim.

One by one, as the condemned ascended the steps of the guillotine to submit to the dreadful execution, they approached Elizabeth and encircled her in an affectionate embrace. At last every head had fallen beneath the ax but that of Elizabeth. The mutilated bodies were before her. The gory heads of those she loved were in a pile by her side. It was a sight to shock the stoutest nerves. But the princess, sustained by that Christian faith which had supported her through her almost unparalleled woes, apparently without a tremor ascended the steps, looked calmly and benignantly around upon the vast multitude, as if in her heart she was imploring God's blessing upon them, and surrendered herself to the executioner. Probably not a purer spirit nor one more attuned for heaven existed in France than the one which then ascended from the scaffold, we trust, to the bosom of God. Maria Antoinette died with the pride and the firmness of the invincible queen. Elizabeth yielded herself to the spirit of submissive piety, and fell asleep upon the bosom of her Savior. Our thoughts would more willingly follow her to those mansions of rest, where

faith instructs us that she winged her flight, than turn again to the prison where the orphan children lingered in solitude and woe.

Young Louis was left in one of the apartments of the Temple, under the care of the brutal Simon, whose commission it was to *get quit of him*. To send a child of seven years of age to the guillotine because his father was a king, was a step which the Revolutionary Tribunal *then* was hardly willing to take, out of regard to the opinions of the world. It would be hardly consistent with the character of the great nation to *poison* the child; and yet, while he lived, there was a rallying point around which the sympathies of royalty could congregate. *Louis must die!* Simon must not *kill* him; he must not *poison* him; he must *get quit of him*. The public safety demands it. Patriotism demands it. In the accomplishment of this undertaking, the young prince was shut up alone, entirely alone, like a caged beast, in one of the upper rooms of a tower of the Temple. There he was left, day and night, week after week, and month after month, with no companion, with no employment, with no food for thought, with no opportunity for exercise or to breathe the fresh air. A flagon of water, seldom replenished, was placed at his bedside. The door was occasionally half opened, and some coarse food thrown in to the poor child. He never washed himself. For more than a year, his

clothes, his shirt, and his shoes had never been changed. For six months his bed was not made, and the unhappy child, consigned to this living burial, remained silent and immovable upon the impure pallet, breathing his own infection. By long inactivity his limbs became rigid. His mind, by the dead inaction which succeeded terror, lost its energy, and became, not only brutalized, but depraved. The noble child of warm affections, polished manners, and active intellect, was thus degraded far below the ordinary condition of the brute.

Thus eighteen months rolled away, and the poor boy became insane through mental exhaustion and debility. But even then he retained a lively sense of gratitude for every word or act of kindness. At one time, the inhuman wretch who was endeavoring by slow torture to conduct this child to the grave, seized him by the hair, and threatened to dash out his brains against the wall. A surgeon, M. Naulin, who chanced to be near by, interfered in behalf of the unhappy victim, and rescued him from the rage of the tyrant. Two pears that evening were given to the half-famished child for his supper. He hid them under his pillow, and went supperless to sleep. The next day he presented the two pears to his benefactor, very politely expressing his regret that he had no other means of manifesting his gratitude.

Torrents of blood were daily flowing from the

guillotine. Illustrious wealth, or rank, or virtue, condemned the possessor to the scaffold. Terror held its reign in every bosom. No one was safe. The public became weary of these scenes of horror. A reaction commenced. Many of the firmest Republicans, overawed by the tyranny of the mob, began secretly to long for the repose which kingly power had given the nation. Sympathy was excited for the woes of the imprisoned prince. It is difficult to record, without pleasure, that one of the first acts of this returning sense of humanity consisted in leading the barbarous Simon to the guillotine. History does not inform us whether he shuddered in view of his crimes under the ax. But his crimes were almost too great for humanity to forgive. Louis was placed under the care of more merciful keepers. His wasted frame and delirious mind, generous and affectionate even in its delirium, moved their sympathy and their tears. They washed and dressed their little prisoner; spake to him in tones of kindness; soothed and comforted him. Louis gazed upon them with a vacant air, hardly knowing, after more than two years of hatred, execration, and abuse, what to make of expressions of gentleness and mercy. But it was too late. Simon had faithfully executed his task. The constitution of the young prince was hopelessly undermined. He was seized with a fever. The Convention, ashamed of the past, sent the celebrated physician Desault to

visit him. The patient, inured to suffering, with blighted hopes and a crushed heart, lingered in silence and patience for a few days upon his bed, and died on the 8th of June, 1795, in the tenth year of his age.

The change which had commenced in the public mind, preparing the way for Napoleon to quell these revolutionary horrors, was so great, that a very general feeling of sympathy was awakened by the death of the young prince, and a feeling of remorse pervaded the conscience of the nation. History contains few stories more sorrowful than the death of this child. To the limited vision of mortals, it is indeed inexplicable why he should have been left by that God, who rules in infinite wisdom and love, to so dreadful a fate. For the solution of this and all other inexplicable mysteries of the divine government, we must look forward to our immortality.

But we must return to Maria Theresa. We left her at midnight, delirious with grief and terror, upon the pallet of her cell, her aunt having just been torn from her embrace. Even the ravages of captivity had not destroyed the exceeding beauty of the princess, now sixteen years of age. The slow hours of that night of anguish lingered away, and the morning, cheerless and companionless, dawned through the grated window of her prison upon her woe. Thus days and nights went and came. She knew not what had been the fate of her mother. She knew

not what doom awaited her aunt. She could have no intercourse with her brother, who she only knew was suffering every conceivable outrage in another part of the prison. Her food was brought to her by those who loved to show their brutal power over the daughter of a long line of kings. Weeks and months thus rolled on without any alleviation, without the slightest gleam of joy or hope penetrating the midnight gloom of her cell. It is impossible for the imagination to paint the anguish endured by this beautiful, intellectual, affectionate, and highly-accomplished princess during these weary months of solitude and captivity. Every indulgence was withheld from her, and conscious existence became the most weighty woe. Thus a year and a half lingered slowly away, while the reign of terror was holding its high carnival in the streets of blood-deluged Paris, and every friend of royalty, of whatever sex or age, all over the empire, was hunted down without mercy.

When the reaction awakened by these horrors commenced in the public mind, the rigor of her captivity was somewhat abated. The death of her brother roused in her behalf, as the only remaining child of the wrecked and ruined family, such a feeling of sympathy, that the Assembly consented to regard her as a prisoner of war, and to exchange her with the Austrian government for four French officers whom they held as prisoners. Maria Theresa was

led, pale, pensive, heart-broken, hopeless, from her cell, and placed in the hands of the relatives of her mother. But her griefs had been so deep, her bereavements so utter and heart-rending, that this change seemed to her only a mitigation of misery, and not an accession of joy. She was informed of the death of her mother and her aunt, and weeping over her desolation, she emerged from her prison cell and entered the carriage to return to the palaces of Austria, where her unhappy mother had passed the hours of her childhood. As she rode along through the green fields and looked out upon the blue sky, through which the summer's sun was shedding its beams, as she felt the pure air, from which she had so long been excluded, fanning her cheeks, and realized that she was safe from insults and once more free, anguish gave place to a calm and settled melancholy. She arrived in Vienna. Love and admiration encircled her. Every heart vied in endeavors to lavish soothing words and delicate attentions upon this stricken child of grief. She buried her face in the bosoms of those thus soliciting her love, her eyes were flooded with tears, and she sobbed with almost a bursting heart. After her arrival in Vienna, one full year passed away before a smile could ever be won to visit her cheek. Woes such as she had endured pass not away like the mists of the morning. The hideous dream haunted her by day and by night.

The headless trunks of her father, her mother, and her aunt were ever before her eyes. Her beloved brother, suffering and dying upon a beggar's bed, was ever present in her dreams while reposing under the imperial canopy of the Austrian kings. The past had been so long and so awful that it seemed an ever-living reality. The sudden change she could hardly credit but as the delirium of a dream.

Time, however, will diminish the poignancy of every sorrow save those of remorse. Maria was now again in a regal palace, surrounded with every luxury which earth could confer. She was young and beautiful. She was beloved and almost adored. Every monarch, every prince, every embassador from a foreign court, delighted to pay her especial honor. No heart throbbed near her but with the desire to render her some compensation for the wrongs and the woes which had fallen upon her youthful and guileless heart. Wherever she appeared she was greeted with love and homage. Those who had never seen her would willingly peril their lives in any way to serve her. Thus was she raised to consideration, and enshrined in the affections of every soul retaining one spark of noble feeling. The past receded farther and farther from her view, the present arose more and more vividly before the eye. Joy gradually returned to that bosom from which it had so long been a stranger. The flowers bloomed beautifully before

her eyes, the birds sung melodiously in her ears. The fair face of creation, with mountain, vale, and river, beguiled her thoughts, and introduced images of peace and beauty to dispel the hideous phantoms of dungeons and misery. The morning drive around the beautiful metropolis; the evening serenade; the moonlight sail; and above all, the voice of *love,* reanimated her heart, and roused her affections from the tomb in which they so long had slumbered. The smile of youth, though still pensive and melancholy, began to illumine her saddened features. Hope of future joy rose to cheer her. The Duc d'Angoulême, son of Charles X., sought her as his bride, and she was led in tranquil happiness to the altar, feeling as few can feel the luxury of being tenderly beloved.

Upon the fall of Napoleon she returned to France with the Bourbon family, and again moved, with smiles of sadness, among the brilliant throng crowding the palaces of her ancestors. The Revolution of 1830, which drove the Bourbons again from the throne of France, drove Maria Theresa, now Duchesse d'Angoulême, again into exile. For a time she and her husband lived in the Castle of Holyrood, in Scotland, under the name of the Count and Countess of Marne; but the climate being too severe for her constitution, she left that region for Vienna. There she was received with every possible demonstration of respect and affection. She resided in the imperial

castle of Frohsdorf a venerated widow, having passed through three-score years and ten of a more varied life than is often experienced by mortals. Even to the hour of her death, her furrowed cheeks retained the traces, in their pensive expression, of the sorrow which darkened her early years.

THE END.

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